POLICE · BUDGET · EDITION

EDITED BY HAROLD FURNISS

FAMOUS CRIMES

PAST AND PRESENT

ONE · PENNY

CATHERINE HALL AND THE OFFICER.

Vol. III.—No. 34.

THE CRIME OF CATHERINE HAYES

Who was burnt at the stake for Petit Treason.

"Oh, curse of marriage,
That we can call these delicate creatures ours,
And not their appetites! I had rather be a toad,
And live upon the vapour of a dungeon,
Than keep a corner in the thing I love
For others' uses."

—SHAKESPEARE, "Othello," Act III. Sc. 3.

PART I.

LIVING in a pretty cottage on the main road to London, a few miles from Birmingham, in the year 1726, was a farm labourer named Hall, whose occupation as a ploughman in those days brought him but a paltry wage. Yet, being a sober, quiet man, with his wife doing a bit at harvest and haymaking time, and his only daughter, Kate, making herself useful up at the farmhouse in the dairy, they managed to jog along very comfortably, for there were but the three in the family, and there was not much chance of indulging in extravagant habits. A new smock once a year for Gaffer Hall, a gown for the missus, and a smart bonnet for Kitty at Easter, was about the only call upon the old lady's bank, which consisted of a long stocking rolled up under the mattress of the bed. Take it altogether, the little household lived happily enough in their humble cot with the honeysuckle-covered porch and the white clusters of roses growing up to the lattice windows of the bedrooms.

There wasn't a prettier or smarter girl than Kate Hall to be found for miles round, and she set many a young yokel's heart thumping under his green-embroidered Sunday smock when they met her in a quiet lane on a summer's eve, and the young squire never allowed her to pass without a word of flattery, and folks did say that he had been seen to chuck her under her dimpled chin, and even go so far as to steal a not too unwilling kiss from her cherry lips.

There was no getting over the fact, though—Kitty Hall was a decidedly pretty and attractive girl. Only just over fifteen years of age, she had the plumpness of womanhood and a coquettish demeanour far in advance of her years. A wealth of fair hair, sparkling blue—almost violet-coloured—eyes, and a complexion like the roses and lilies that grew in their bit of a garden. She was undoubtedly the belle of the village. If there was one fault in her features, it was in the mouth. When smiling or laughing, it was pretty enough, for her teeth were a set for a countess to be proud of; but when the brow was knitted and the lips set together there was a cruel expression in the long thin upper lip, which to the physiognomist could not be mistaken. In a word, Catherine Hall not only had a temper and a will of her own but beneath her well-rounded bosom there was a heart that had little feeling for aught else but her own selfish pleasures, and compassion or affection for anybody she had none.

Such was the disposition and appearance of the young lady—so far as I am able to discover—who is to pose as the principal actress in the tragedy I am about to relate. It is only natural to suppose that in one with such a disposition, and surrounded by undue flattery for her position in life, conceit and vanity would grow apace. So it was with Miss Kitty, until at home there was no bearing with her. Disobedient to her father and defying her mother, she practically ruled the roost. Keeping unseemly hours in the evening for so quiet a country place, she courted, too, not a little scandal from the more sober-minded, if plainer-looking, girls of the village. At length there was no bearing with the girl at home. Quarrel succeeded quarrel with her mother, and the once happy little cottage became unbearable in her presence.

One night she had returned home unusually late, flushed and excited, and in no good humour, when her father swore that he would have no more of it, and high words ensued, which led to the girl being struck across the face by the ploughman's heavy hand.

This brought matters to a climax. About four o'clock on the following summer's morning Catherine Hall might have been seen quietly lifting the latch of the little cottage door, and, passing through the garden for the last time, making her way to the high road. She had put on her best clothes, and, with her short skirts, shapely legs in blue worsted stockings, high-heeled, buckled shoes, and large Leghorn hat, trimmed with cerise ribbon, might have stepped out of a canvas by Gainsborough or Sir Joshua Reynolds. She carried her little belongings in a striped handkerchief tied in a bundle, and, with but a few shillings in her pocket, turned her back upon the home of her birth, never to return. Little did Catherine Hall dream, when she left behind her the perfume of the roses, sparkling with the dewdrops of that summer's morn, and heard the skylark trill, as it rose to greet the rising sun, that before many years would be over her head her name would ring out through the length and breadth of the land and be upon everybody's lips as one of the most notorious criminals of the century and accursed females of the age.

As I observed, in this story which leads up to the crime there is much of romance, and I would fain dwell at greater length upon the many adventures which befell Catherine Hall before she became notorious to the world, but available space forbids.

She was not long in commencing to play an active and prominent part upon the stage of life, and it was the first and fatal step to her downfall and damnation.

It must be known that during this particular year, 1726 (the last year of King George I.'s reign), there was considerable excitement in military and naval circles. An alliance had just been entered into between Great Britain,

France, Holland, Prussia, Denmark, and Sweden to counteract the treaty of Vienna between Austria and Spain. It looked very like a European war. This, however, was happily averted, but not until our army and navy had been

Stealing a not too unwilling kiss.

greatly augmented and preparations made for actual warfare. It was at the very height of this excitement in the country that Catherine Hall left her home. So it was not at all extraordinary that, as she made her way in the direction of London, she should fall in with a company of troopers who were changing from one garrison town to another. Neither was it to be wondered at that a pretty girl like Kate should attract the attention of some of the young officers who were on the march, and who were in those days quite privileged so far as the fair sex were concerned, and invariably found themselves favoured where a civilian would be snubbed.

One of these dashing young officers evidently became smitten at first sight by the comely wench, and was not long in falling out from the column, and introducing himself to her. Such an impression did he make that in a very short time he had learned the girl's history and intention to make her way to London. An opportunity like this so unexpectedly thrown into his way was not to be neglected, and, with very little difficulty, he persuaded the fair Catherine to give up her project of going to the metropolis and accompany him to their quarters, which was at Great Ombersley, in Worcestershire.

The life she led there was just what suited the flighty Kate. Of course, she became the mistress of the young officer, and there was no secret about the matter, for that sort of thing was carried on very openly in those days, and a woman of easy virtue, if in the keeping of anybody of note, even had the entrée to society. So, her guardian being the eldest son of a nobleman, Miss Hall had a very gay time of it, and in her rich dresses and abundant jewellery, cut a very dashing figure, and was idolised by half the officers of the regiment.

But the fair Catherine, it appears, could not for the life of her go straight. Her lover, after a few months, had reason to suspect—and good reason, too—her fidelity, and at once cast her off. It was proved that she was on familiar terms with no less than half-a-dozen of his fellow officers, and the fact having once become known, Kate's career in the camp soon came to an end. Scorned by everybody, she turned her back upon Great Ombersley, and, with the proceeds of the sale of her jewellery and other valuables, lived at a village some miles away, where she became a mother. The child, which was a boy, was put to nurse with a family of the name of Billings, and Catherine Hall, who was by this time without money or friends, once more set out to seek her fortune.

Making her way into Warwickshire, she served in several places as dairymaid, and eventually found a situation at a farmer's, a Mr. Hayes, not very far from Worcester. They were very kind people, and treated her almost as their daughter, having only one child of their own, a son, a fine, strapping fellow, who at the time Catherine came to live with his parents was away finishing his apprenticeship as a carpenter.

Shortly after Kate's arrival the son came home, and, as a matter of course, the fascinating Catherine captured his affections at first sight. The lady had not had her education neglected in this direction during her stay with the military, and her figure was now more voluptuous and her eye still more lustful than ever, so young Hayes "fell like Samson 'neath Delilah's kiss." They were well-to-do people, and Catherine made up her mind to secure a position this time, and not throw herself away as she had foolishly done before. The more she resented his passionate advances the greater became his infatuation, and she played her part so well that he was induced, finding that he could not make her his mistress, to make her his wife.

Young Hayes knew well enough that it was useless for him to ask permission of his parents, for they had always

Passed through the garden for the last time.

tried to instil into his mind the evil of an early and hasty marriage, and his father was determined that he should go into business and make a position for himself ere he took a wife. All this the young man knew, but the temptress was too much for him, and his passion was uncontrollable.

So he was determined to make the plunge, come what might. Better for him had he made that plunge into the nearest river and been dragged thence a lifeless body.

Hayes made every arrangement for their elopement. He took lodgings at Worcester, managed to get a sum of money from his parents, making the excuse that he wished complete new chests of tools of the most modern and perfect kind, so that he might set up in business as a carpenter and builder; and, saying good-bye, left home ostensibly for that purpose.

A few days after his departure, one summer's morning as the rising sun glittered on the dewdrops and the birds warbled their matin song, the latch of the farmhouse door was gently raised, and again Catherine Hall stepped lightly on to the main road.

What a difference those few short years—sped so quickly with her—had made! No longer the giddy, careless girl

Captured his affections at first sight.

that left her parents' cottage to seek her fortune, she knew not how and cared not where; no longer possessed of the slight figure and abundant golden hair, let free over her shoulders, and waving in the breeze; but the well-set, commanding figure of a woman, the handsome face, yet with the brazen features of the courtesan, the thin lips set close, with brow knit and determination in her expression. She was playing the trump card. Should she win? Well she knew that there's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip—better, she knew of the passion she had kindled in the man's breast—love he told himself it was. She was sure that he would not fail her at the last moment; that he was mad, dreaming and longing for the ecstasy of her embrace. And as she left the home of his birth as she had left that of her own, never to return again, she laughed a long, unnatural cadence that for the moment came so strangely upon the air that the very birds seemed awed, and ceased their song.

"Mine! mine! The mad fool!" she half muttered, half screeched. "Yes, and their money too shall be mine, curse them!"

Catherine Hall had made no miscalculation. He was awaiting her at the cross roads just outside the town of Worcester as she alighted from the carrier's cart, and they were married that very morning.

And now comes an episode in this extraordinary history of Catherine Hayes, as she is now, that will scarcely be credited. I took the record of the incident with a large grain of salt myself when I first read it; but I have since verified the fact from at least three sources, and find also that it was referred to at the time of the trial whilst entering into the full particulars of this woman's career.

Although everything had been done presumably on the quiet, and none of young Hayes's friends knew of the nuptials, it leaked out in some mysterious manner to several whom it interested in the city of Worcester. It so happened that some of the officers to whom Kate had been mistress were quartered with their regiment in the town, and she had been recognised. Inquiries had been made by them, and they had discovered the marriage and the abode of the newly-wedded couple. In spite, mischief, envy, or prompted by the mania for practical joking, they put their heads together in order to play what they called a trick upon the fair Catherine.

Late one night, a few days after the marriage, a sergeant of the company was instructed to take a file of men with him to the house where Hayes and his wife lodged, to gain admittance—force the door if necessary—and enter the bedroom without ceremony and arrest the man as a deserter.

These instructions were carried out to the letter, and the scene in the nuptial chamber may be better imagined than described, for the woman, according to the account of one of the soldiers who entered the apartment so unexpectedly, was even more lightly clad than is usual with the gentler sex, and presented an Eve-like appearance. In spite of protestations, the unfortunate bridegroom was forced to get up and dress, when he was marched between the guard as a deserter to the barracks. It was said that after he was secured one of the officers—of course as a matter of duty only, and to make the necessary inquiries as to the prisoner's identity—went to the rooms where the extraordinary episode had taken place, and that the interview with his old flame Catherine was considerably prolonged. Anyhow, there was a terrible to do over the affair, for the officers, having had their fling, found themselves in rather a quandary as to the disposal of Mr. Hayes. They therefore swore that he had taken the king's shilling only a few days before, and that they were in their rights by arresting.

This being the situation, young Hayes had no alternative but to communicate with his father, who immediately came to Worcester, and, of course, learned of the marriage. Indignant with his son for his faithless behaviour, his paternal feeling got the better of him, and he went to a magistrate and proved that his son was living at home on the date when the officers declared he had enlisted. The magistrate demanded to know by what right the man was detained, and threatened the ringleaders with imprisonment if Hayes were not released immediately. This was done, and the officers were only too pleased to have perpetrated their little joke without more serious results.

It took some time for the elder Hayes and his wife to forgive Catherine and their son; but, to make the best of a bad job, they did so, and furnished them with sufficient money to go into business. This done, they jogged along pretty well, but Mrs. Hayes was constantly getting into hot water with the neighbours through her mischievous tongue, and they had to remove from town to town to avoid unpleasantness.

Then came another extraordinary display of eccentricity upon the part of the lady. She actually induced her husband to enlist in the army. Whether this was done because she had learned to "doat on the military," or that she hoped to meet some of her former sweethearts, it is difficult to imagine. Anyhow, as usual, she succeeded in having her way, and he was made a full private, and sent to the Isle of Wight, where Catherine, after enjoying herself in a very questionable manner, followed him, and became a servant in the officers' quarters. Whether after these few years of married life Mr. Hayes began to distrust his spouse or not, it is hard to say, but the life in barracks was not at all to his taste under the existing arrangements, and once more

he fell back upon the generosity and forgiving nature of his parents, who procured his discharge, which, it is on record, cost them no less than £60.

I may here mention that there was no issue to the marriage, and by this time Catherine must have been over thirty years of age. They, after her husband left the army, lived with the old people for some time, when Hayes came into a legacy of ten pounds a year, which was followed shortly afterwards by an additional sixteen pounds annually. As money went then this was not so bad, especially as once more the elder Hayes found money for his son to go into business.

Had they at this period of their career hit it together, they might have became prosperous citizens, for Hayes bore a character for honesty, industry, and cheerfulness. He had one failing, perhaps, and that was the possession of a lending office. At the time there was no law relating to pawnbroking, and he advanced sums upon various articles at most remunerative interest, making money very rapidly. Still the unhappiness would seem to have continued, for the same biographer, writing about Catherine Hayes a few months after her death, says:

"Mrs. Hayes's conduct in London was still more reprehensible than it had been in the country, the chief pleasure of her life consisting in creating and encouraging quarrels among her neighbours; and, indeed, her unhappy disposition discovered itself on every occasion. Sometimes she would speak of her husband to his acquaintance in terms of great tenderness and respect; and at other times she would represent him to her female associates as a compound of everything that was contemptible in human nature. On a particular occasion she told a woman of her acquaint-

ENTERED THE BEDROOM WITHOUT ANY CEREMONY.

most avaricious disposition. This desire for money and the hoarding of it was contrary, as might easily be understood, to the feelings of the wife, and she was for ever taunting him with his miserly propensities.

"Anything for a comfortable life" seemed to be his maxim, and for years he treated his wife most indulgently, in spite of the detestation she showed towards him and opposition to his every purpose. As time went on she developed into a perfect tartar, and her "turbulent, quarrelsome, and perpetually exciting disputes among her neighbours," to quote from one of her biographers, led to the greatest discomfort and unhappiness. So much so that the elder Mr. Hayes begged his son to leave his wife and allow her an income. This he refused to do, for he was still attached to her, in spite of all her vices and ill-treatment towards him.

To please her they came to London, and settled in the Tottenham Court Road, then surrounded by fields and trees—open country right away to Highgate and Hampstead. Mr. Hayes there kept a coal store and money-

ance that she should think it no more sin to murder him than to kill a dog."

Little did those who heard her express herself in such a manner believe that at least in this one statement the woman was horribly sincere.

As business increased so the quarrels multiplied, and they had to leave their residence in Tottenham Court Road and took a house in the Tyburn Road, now Oxford Street.

And so matters went on for a considerable period. Madam, who by this time must have been more than forty, still preserved her good looks and fine commanding figure—still retained the amorous passions which had been her curse through life, and apparently indulged in them under her husband's very eye.

Either for the sake of peace, or because he was blind to her doings, however, no fuss was made, although there were few of her acquaintances who were not cognisant of her lewdness. Hand in hand with her other vice came drink, and the latter would seem to have brought to the surface all the woman's worst nature. By this time the dor-

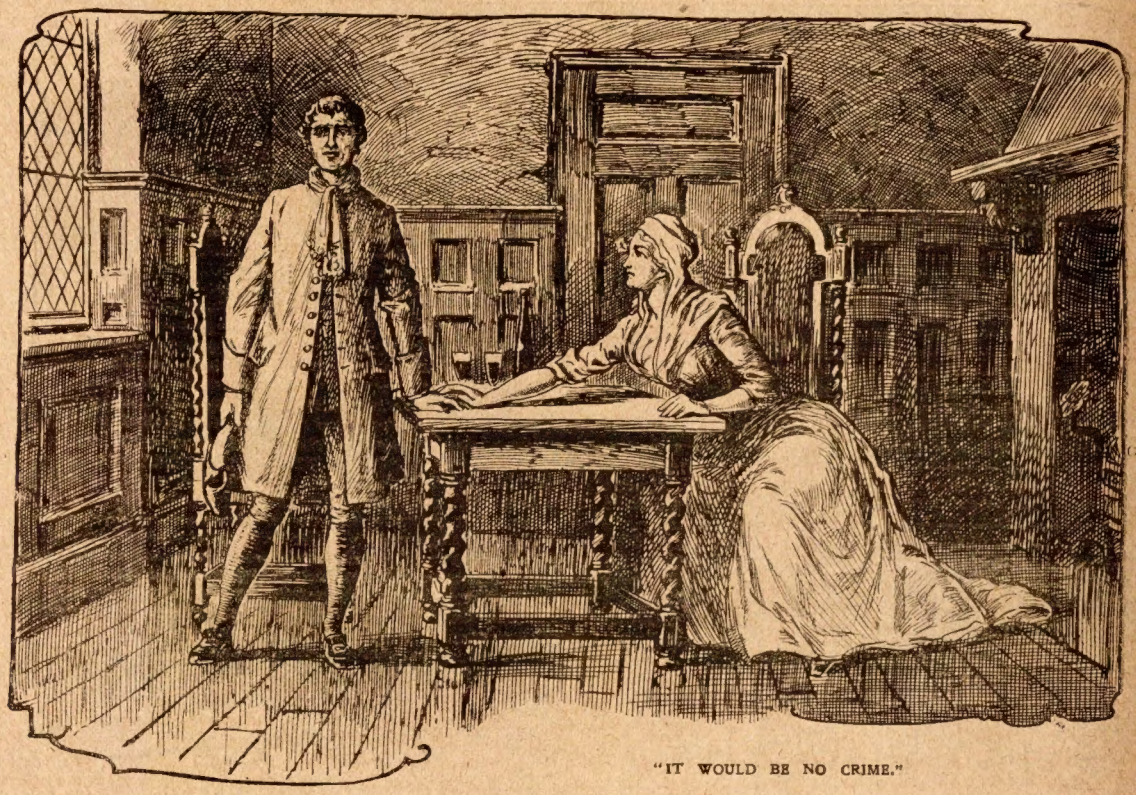
mant spirit of the husband seems to have been somewhat roused, for one evening when she had been indulging in one of her debauches of longer duration than usual, they quarrelled. Words led to blows, and Hayes struck his wife severely, marking her face badly.

From that moment she swore to seek her revenge. Never having had the slightest pretentions of affection for her husband, the dislike she had nursed had long turned to hate, but now she loathed him. The very devil entered her body, and the fire kindled in her mind was fanned by her thoughts to the fiercest blaze. In the midst of all this passion within her, which lasted weeks, she gave way to her vices more freely than ever. Her constant paramour was a young man by the name of Thomas Wood, a friend of her husband's, who had been brought to his house, and who had fallen a victim to the ripe charms of this lascivious woman. Once in her meshes, it was impossible for him to escape this fiend in the flesh. Her languishing eyes, her quavering, passionate embrace, her affectation of love, and her seductive form and fine, voluptuous figure were all too much for most men, and when the snares were laid the victim hovered like the moth to the candle to be burnt, yet eager to embrace its fate again.

And now events of great moment moved along very quickly. Mr. Hayes was called away on business in the country, which would detain him for some weeks. They had parted bad friends, for since the blows were struck their lives had been all but unbearable to each other, and, to make matters worse, Hayes had also given way to drink. His absence was a great relief to Catherine, and she made good use of her liberty. It so happened that a young fellow who was by trade a tailor had recently come to London from the Midlands, and had taken lodgings at the same house in which the Hayes resided, the place being let off in floors of apartments, Catherine and her husband having their rooms on the first storey, the ground floor being occupied by a Mrs. Springate, with her husband and child, whilst the upper rooms were let out as bedrooms. One of these latter was occupied by the young tailor.

Mr. Hayes had not been gone away more than a few days when it was no secret that the designing Catherine had thrown her net over the handsome young countryman. They were constantly in each other's society, and the greatest familiarity was known to exist between them, Mrs. Springate being able later on to give evidence of the most compromising nature concerning both.

Catherine, with the arguments and inducements which she knew how to employ with these young men, enlisted their services as accomplices. The tailor fell an easy prey to the wily woman, but Thomas Wood was so horrified at the thought of murdering his friend that he refused. But Catherine implored, bartered her body for his complicity, and used a hundred arguments in favour of the justice of the crime. What think you of this, the very words she spoke, and which came out at the trial, uncontradicted by the woman:



"IT WOULD BE NO CRIME."

"It would be no crime to kill such an atheistical person, who had no religion or goodness; that he was himself a murderer, having killed a man in the country, and likewise two of his own children, one of which he had buried under a pear tree and the other under an apple tree." She likewise said that her husband's death would put her into possession of fifteen hundred pounds, of the whole of which Wood should have the disposal if he would assist her and the tailor (whom she had already enlisted as an accomplice) in the prosecution of the murder.

The day before the return of Mr. Hayes, Catherine had won the services of Thomas Wood, and during the whole of that night the three conspirators were closeted together, well primed with wine, in that bedroom which had been witness to so much vice, and now was to be turned into the bloody chamber of the dead.

TO BE CONTINUED

THE WAYS OF THE CRIMINAL

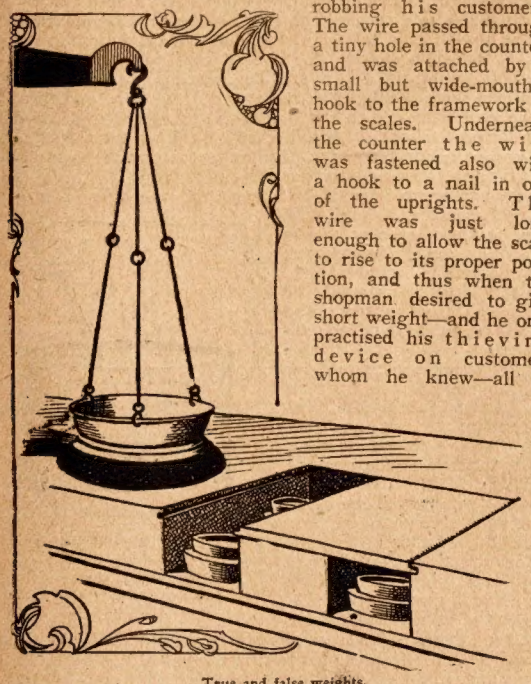
XIX.—TRADESMEN WHO SWINDLE, AND TRICKS TRIED ON TRADESMEN.

THE meanest of criminals are those who prey upon the poor, and none are so contemptible as those swindling tradesmen who rob their unfortunate customers right and left. Inspectors of weights and measures, and inspectors under the Food and Drugs Acts are here, there, and everywhere, day in and day out, but still the dishonest shopkeeper reaps his illicit profits and does his clients out of their just dues.

In the old bad days, before there were inspectors, all the fraudulent shopkeeper had to do was to possess untrue weights and scales. But when a law was passed dealing with this evil, and the shopman found himself liable to a heavy fine if an official entered his premises and found the untrue weights, he had to look round for other means of robbing his customers. Many and ingenious have been the devices resorted to.

One man went to extraordinary lengths in his desire to cheat. On his counter he kept two sets of weights—one set at least three ounces in the pound against the customer, and the other perfectly correct. The two sets, which were identical in shape and size, were, however, never in sight on the counter together. They were both kept in wells sunk in the counter. When regular customers were in the shop the false weights were freely used; if a stranger entered the true ones were resorted to. Over each well a cleverly-arranged sliding cover fitted to a nicety, and the pressure of a spring threw these panels into place at the will of the shopman, who, of course, did most of the serving himself.

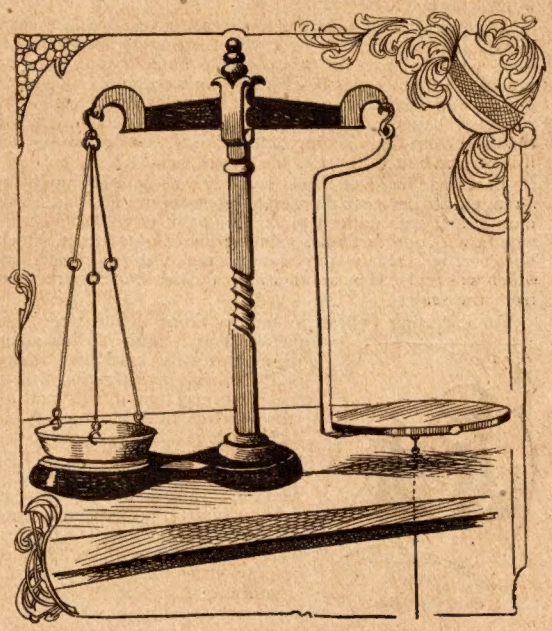
Yet another man used a fine piano wire to aid him in robbing his customers. The wire passed through a tiny hole in the counter, and was attached by a small but wide-mouthed hook to the framework of the scales. Underneath the counter the wire was fastened also with a hook to a nail in one of the uprights. The wire was just long enough to allow the scale to rise to its proper position, and thus when the shopman desired to give short weight—and he only practised his thieving device on customers whom he knew—all he had to do was to press against the wire with his knee, and the trick was done. Probably he would have still been using the wire but for the fact that a sharp inspector bowled him out rather neatly. The official, who, "from information received," had reason to suspect the shopkeeper, waited about outside the shop for several days, taking particular note of the customers. At last he hit upon one who frequented the shop pretty regularly, and hence was more likely to be a victim than anyone else. Cautiously approaching the woman, the inspector explained his motive, and asked her to return to the shop and buy a couple of pounds of bacon. The woman did so, and the inspector, watching from the other side of the road, saw her make the purchase. As she waited for the change the official ran across the road into the shop, and, placing one hand on the parcel of bacon, reached the other towards the scales. So quick was he that the shopman had no chance to unhook the wire, his usual practice when danger threatened, and the conviction followed as a matter of course.



True and false weights.

The common trick of swindling grocers is to place a bit of fat bacon between the pan and the frame of the scales, and thus gain half-an-ounce or an ounce on every purchase. This method has the advantage that when danger threatens the bacon can be instantly removed, for tradesman have a habit, when about to weigh anything, of turning the pan on its side and tapping it smartly against the counter in order to shake out any particles which may be adhering to the pan. Thus the bacon could be easily thrown out.

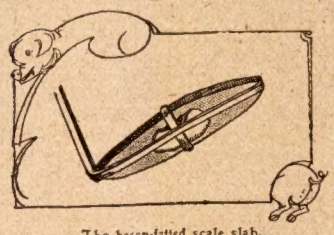
It is now too risky a matter to cheat with false weights, but an inspector who spoke to the writer showed him a number of dishonest weights which he collected during the first year he was in office. Some of these have metal cases and wooden interiors, and are as much as forty per cent. lighter than they purport to be, while others were hollowed out and filled with sand, and still others had wooden plugs fitted into holes which, if the weights had been true, would have been filled with lead.



The scale with wire attachment.

Some small coal-dealers in the provinces are terrible offenders in the matter of short weight. One man was fined £75 recently, and it was proved during the hearing of the charge against him that he sent out loads of "black diamonds" in "tons" which were from four to five hundredweight short of the proper weight. Another man who used to haul his coal from the railway siding sold it by the cartload, the weight the customer paid for being that represented on the weigh-bridge ticket. On the weigh-bridge, of course, cart and coal were weighed together, the official at the machine having in his possession the weight of the cart. At this particular coal yard matters were conducted in rather a haphazard way, and no one for many months found out that concealed in a sort of locker at the front of the cart were three weights of one hundred-weight each. Every time a load was weighed, the supposed weight of the cart was deducted from the gross, the balance being the supposed weight of the coal. As a matter of fact, the coal was three hundredweight short of the weight represented on the bridge bill. It was an accident which brought this fraud to light. One

morning in the winter, when coals were very dear, and there was a slight coating of ice on the ground, the man under notice pulled off the bridge with his usual load. There was a scramble and a dash, the horse stepping on some ice had gone down, and over the animal's back rattled part of the loose load of coal and two of the three weights, which, "fetching away" with the jolt of the fall, broke the cover of the locker, and proclaimed their presence to all and sundry. Now, in that coal yard every cart is weighed as it goes in, and examined as it goes out, so that there is little chance of cheating, unless the carter, by standing on the bridge, manages to get himself weighed in with the cart and load



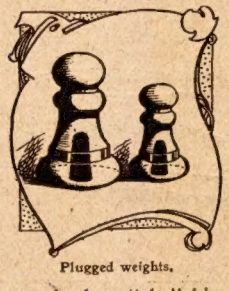
The bacon-fatted scale slab.

Weights have been found with their centres filled with cork coloured to look like lead plugs, whilst in Ireland not so long ago the pet practice of the fraudulent tradesman was to use badly-battered measures, which saved him a good deal in the course of the year.

Butchers, when weighing up meat, have a habit of sticking on an extra ounce or two, whilst fruiterers always reckon upon what they call a "good scale hand" adding to the profits. A man of this description can weigh up goods in the presence of customers and send the scales down with a resounding bang. With a rapid movement the purchase is removed from the machine, and it is safe betting to say that it is several ounces short of the proper weight.

Last year in Fleet Street a coster was caught employing an ingenious device to defraud his customers. He was selling plums, and was noticed to have a habit of making up the weight with one particularly fine specimen of the fruit, which, however, was always too heavy to make up the pound, and which was replaced by another after the bag had been removed from the scales.

An inquiring policeman took a fancy to the plum, and picked it up. Much to his astonishment it was hard and heavy, and further investigation led to the discovery that it was nothing more or less than a piece of lead artfully shaped and coloured to represent the fruit.



Plugged weights.

Then there are the tradesmen who use false measures, quarts that are not quarts, pecks that are not what they appear to be. Measures with false bottoms have been frequently dropped on by the inspectors, and one of these officials came across a man who cleverly contrived to "do" his customers. He was a corn-dealer, and a great part of his trade was done with working people, who purchased from him the food for their chickens. He used wooden measures, the bottoms of which were smeared with gum. To this, of course, the corn adhered, and the process was repeated until there was a solid cake about half an inch thick in the bottom of the "peck." This represented a shortage of a little over a pint, and brought in a very respectable profit to the dishonest dealer.

But the game is not always on the side of the tradesman. More than anyone else, perhaps, unless it be the publican, he is the special mark of the criminal. He has to guard against burglars and shop-lifters, and occasionally along comes a confidence trick man who, by reason of his colossal cheek, easily dupes the shopkeeper.

A swindler who has plundered a great number of tradesmen, and who, by the way, is still at large, is a plausible gentleman, well dressed, and of excellent appearance, who is anxious to apprentice a ward of his to some profitable trade or other—always to the trade of the man who is to be victimised. The swindler enters the shop, asks for the principal, and at once introduces the business. He is armed with letters and credentials bearing the names of well known firms of solicitors, incidentally a cheque-book on a famous bank is shown amongst the papers, and he poses as the trustee and guardian of a youth who wishes when he comes of age to go into business for himself. Supposing the prospective victim is a grocer, the youth has decided to become a grocer. Would the "to-be-swindled" care to take an apprentice? "Of course," adds the trustee, "I should not expect you to take him without a premium for your trouble of teaching him the business, but I should expect you to devote some of your time to him and teach him the inside mysteries of the trade." So the discussion goes on, and if the grocer agrees to accept the lad the amount of the premium is fixed, and forthwith the swindler proceeds to draw a cheque for the amount. Amongst the papers which he lays out on the table is one apparently from the bank stating that as he had desired, £2,500, or some other sum, had been transferred from his deposit to his current account. It is, of course, only an artistic detail to inspire confidence, and generally succeeds pretty well. The cheque is drawn, but before handing it over the swindler suggests that he should be given a small percentage on the premium. He points out that he has agreed to a fairly large sum, etc., etc., and soon the tradesman falls into the net. Perhaps the agreed premium is £50, and the swindler asks for five of that sum. As a rule he gets it in hard cash, and then departs. It is not until banking hours next day that the grocer realises that he has been had, and that he has parted with a commission on a premium which does not exist.

A battered measure.

Another set of swindlers confine their operations to seaports, and pretending to be the executive officers of a steamship, visit the chandlers' stores, where they give big orders for goods to last the vessel on her next voyage. A commission is invariably asked for, and more often than not obtained. When the goods are delivered to the steamship, the real officers, of course, reject them, and then comes the chandler's awakening.

But perhaps the most ingenious swindle of recent years was that in which half-a-dozen men shared the profits, and in which cheeses figured prominently. First of all a grocer in a large way of business was approached by a smart-looking man, who represented that he was travelling on behalf of a farmer who, tired of selling his cheese through an agent, had resolved to go into the business on his own account. Thus being able to dispense with the middleman's profits, he was able to sell at a lower price. The grocer, jumping at the bait, asked to sample the cheese, and forthwith one was brought in from a cart outside the shop, and duly tasted. Others were available if that one did not suit, and then, if the grocer decided to buy, the traveller offered to deliver the order on the spot. "It will save me taking them back, and I'm not going farther to-day," was the traveller's explanation as the cheeses were handed out of the cart. From each cheese a sample would be taken, and the bargain having been concluded with the exchange of cash or cheque (usually cash) for cheese, the traveller would vanish. The cheeses would be stacked up by the grocer, and used as the demand necessitated.

The wooden cheese.
The white part cheese; tinted portion wood; black disc lead.

It would not be good for us to reprint the grocer's language when he endeavours to cut any but the first cheese shown. The latter was the genuine article. All the others were frauds. They consisted of a coating of cheese about a quarter of an inch thick, and a round piece of wood, into which two insertions had been made. One of the holes contained a lump of lead to make up the weight, the other about half a pound of cheese for testing purposes.

Our artist's diagram amply explains the fraud.

THE Paulists, a race of robbers, left Brazil in 1599, and formed a Republic in South America.

The Awful Murders at Denham, 1870.

A tramp named John Jones murdered an entire family, consisting of seven persons, in a few moments of time at a lonely house on the Uxbridge Road.

"The tyrannous and bloody act is done!
The most arch deed of piteous massacre
That ever yet this land was guilty of!"
—SHAKESPEARE, "Richard III.," Act. iv., Sc. 2.

FEW atrocities can be considered to equal, far less to surpass, those of which a man called John Jones—though it is open to doubt if that indeed was his name—was guilty in the month of May of the year which the French still term "the terrible year." In order to obtain a few odds and ends of clothing and a pair of boots, this Mr. Jones—in what he considered a laudable desire to eclipse all similar perpetrations—murdered an entire family one bright Sunday morning, and, having attired himself in the coveted articles, proceeded on his road apparently as happy and free from care as the birds who sang to him from the trees above.

There was nothing half-hearted about this Mr. Jones. He did his fell work with a determination and a thoroughness which causes us to mingle something of admiration—if one can use the word in such a connection—with our natural horror. Happily, his supreme efforts did not go unrewarded, for he was incontinently hanged at Aylesbury very shortly after his exploits near Uxbridge, and, seeing that a more bloodthirsty savage never had being, we shall record his expiation with much greater delight than we shall the horrid crimes of which he was guilty.

Denham—sacred to the memory of this unfortunate family, cut off in their prime in one general massacre—is a quiet little straggling village off the Uxbridge Road, and is just two miles from the latter town. On the evening of May 23, 1870, a series of frightful discoveries was made there. A lonely cottage situated in this place was occupied by a Mr. Marshall and his family. The man was an engineer and was busy at work in his shop attached to the cottage far into the night of the 21st, a Saturday. Nothing, however, having been seen of the family on Sunday, or up till the Monday evening, two men forced open the premises. A ghastly sight met their gaze.

Inside the parlour door was found the bodies of Mrs. Marshall and Mary Ann Marshall, sister of the engineer, lying by the door-post. Her head was smashed in, while Mrs. Marshall's skull also bore token of unparalleled violence, the bones being fractured in several places and the brain matter exposed. Both women were in their night-dresses, and had apparently been dragged to that room from the kitchen, as there were large splashes and pools of blood between the one room and the other. In the back kitchen the body of an aged female, Mr. Marshall's mother, was discovered; the old lady was lying on her right side, with the marks of many severe blows about the face, and the back part of the head was entirely crushed. She was partially dressed, and lying against her breast was the corpse of a young child, aged about four years. The little one, too, was in her night-gown, and it was seen that her head had been smashed to pulp by one terrific blow. In the fireplace were the remains of two other children, Mary Marshall, aged eight, and Teresa Marshall, aged six. The head of the child Mary was very much lacerated, as if she had been thrown down after being killed; the jaw was dreadfully cut, and she was more disfigured than any of the others. She was lying in her chemise, which garment, as in the case of the nightdresses of the others, had been wilfully thrown up over the head and shoulders. The other child, Teresa, was lying face downwards. Her hands were black with soot from the half-empty grate, and there were signs that she had struggled a good deal.

In the blacksmith's shop the body of Emmanuel Marshall was found, lying behind the anvil, on his back, with his face towards the wall. All over this smithy or shop were evidences of a desperate battle. The left side of the engineer's face was completely battered in, and there was a frightful contusion, in the shape of a horseshoe, over the bridge of the nose, while pools of blood lay, dark and forbidding, all about the place. Half a dozen savage cannibals could not have done the gruesome work more completely or left behind them, a more awesome record of their visitation.

It was clear that the assassin, whoever he might be, had first attacked and killed the husband and father, that the women and children had been attracted downstairs by the noise of the struggle, and that the murderer, like an avenging Fury, had pursued each one and brutally done them to death.

The men who forced an entrance were Charles Taverner, the local constable, and a neighbour named Alderman. These two made some important discoveries apart from the finding of the poor battered bodies. About two feet from where the wife and sister lay they picked up a sledge-hammer, which was covered with blood, and near the head of the child Teresa, in the kitchen, was lying an axe, also masked in gore, and which had apparently been used both ways, back and edge. In the forge adjoining the kitchen, close by the body of Emmanuel Marshall, was discovered parts of a poker, which corresponded in pattern with the fireirons found in the parlour of the house.

Taverner decided to send at once for Superintendent Dunham, stationed at Slough, and when that gentleman arrived on the scene of slaughter a more systematic search of the rest of the house was instituted. It became clear that robbery had been the guiding motive on the part of the murderer. Marshall's pockets were turned inside out and his boots were missing. Upstairs there were three bedrooms, the beds in which had evidently been slept in. The bedroom occupied by Marshall and his wife overlooked the smithy, and it would be quite possible to hear from this room any noise in the forge. In this apartment Dunham found a pair of cord trousers, with a patch of blue cloth on the seat, and one on the knee, and these trousers and a pair of boots also found there—no doubt the

Saw a man come out of Marshall's House.

murderer's—were completely saturated with blood. To one boot a piece of brain was adhering.

Two boxes which were in the chamber had been hastily broken open, and several articles of wearing apparel were lying about the floor, the whole place being in a state of great disorder.

The murders were, of course, fully reported in the even-

ing papers of that day, Monday, and created wide-spread consternation, but, fortunately for the public anxiety the news of the capture of the supposed murderer followed close on the heels of the initial discovery.

A tramp had been seen and noticed in the vicinity of the Marshalls' abode by several people, and a woman named Elizabeth Simpson, the wife of a groom living at Cheapside, Denham, about 100 yards from the ill-fated house, came forward with important evidence. She said that she had seen Marshall about eight o'clock on the Saturday night, and also the eldest little girl just before that hour. On the Sunday morning, about seven o'clock, she had occasion to go into the road to look for a key she had dropped, and she saw a respectably-dressed man come out of Marshall's house and walk quietly up the main road. At first she thought it was Marshall himself, but she overtook him in the Uxbridge Road, and he bade her good morning and asked if she were for the train. A few words passed between them relative to the missing key, and then Mrs. Simpson asked the man if she had not seen him leaving the Marshalls' house. He said:

"Yes, you did. The man at that house and his wife, his mother and his children, are all gone for a holiday."

Mrs. Simpson was able to afford some description of this stranger, who did not attempt to hide his features, and her account of his appearance was more or less similar to that of a man whom the constable, Taverner, had encountered at three o'clock in the morning going towards the murdered man's house. This man had, it seems, accosted Taverner with the remark, "I wish I had seen you before, constable." The latter asked him what was the matter, and he said, "I was going along the canal just now, and a man and woman were quarrelling. The man said he would throw the woman into the water, and had he done so I would have thrown him in." He added that he was a stranger about there, and explained that he was on the road to Oxford. The policeman did not like the look of him and followed him a little distance, but as he observed that his suspiciously bulky appearance was only caused by an extra coat he was wearing, he did not like to search him, which had been his first intention.

But a man named Charles Coombs occasioned the actual arrest of the murderer on the evening of the Tuesday. Coombs, who was a bricklayer, lodged with a Mrs. Balham, at Uxbridge, and he knew John Jones, whom he saw sitting in the kitchen of this lodging-house at six o'clock on Saturday evening. Coombs did not stay long, and when he returned to the kitchen at nine o'clock Jones was not there, and Coombs did not see him again that night. He saw him next at about seven-thirty the following morning, and he was dressed in different and much newer and cleaner clothing. The bricklayer was struck by the change for the better in Jones's appearance, and remarked, "Why, John, I don't know you!" to which he received the answer, "I have been to see a brother," and added that the latter had given him the new clothes.

Jones remained at the lodging-house till dinner-time, and came back at three o'clock, but at five o'clock on the Tuesday morning he went into Coombs's bedroom and told him that he was going to Reading, which is 30 miles from Uxbridge. Coombs had heard of the murders on Monday night, and was already suspicious. After Jones had left he went to Superintendent Dunham, told him what he knew, and in the evening they proceeded to Reading and made for the Oxford Arms, in Silver Street. They went into the tramps' kitchen, and as soon as they got to the door Coombs pointed to Jones and said, "That's the man!" Jones moved unconcernedly and said, "I have never killed man, woman or child," although not a word had been said about any murder, and no one in Reading knew of the tragedy at Denham.

THEY TOOK THE PISTOL FROM HIM.

Dunham rushed towards the prisoner and seized him by the throat, and a Reading policeman said, "Be careful! He is pulling something out of his pocket." They caught hold of his hand and removed from it a pistol, afterwards identified as one of a pair owned by Marshall, loaded to the muzzle. The ruffian was securely handcuffed and formally charged with the murders. He again said, "I have never murdered man, woman or child," and added, "But I know who did." Dunham observed, "Why, you have got the murdered man's boots on!" To which the miscreant replied coolly, "That may be." He added a little later something to the effect that he stood by when the murders were committed.

The fact that the prisoner had been seen in the neighbourhood of the crimes and that nearly all of the missing property, including a watch and chain and a purse belonging to Marshall, was clearly traced to him, left very little doubt in the public mind that the authorities had secured the right man, and at the police-court examinations and the trial his guilt was established and proved to the hilt.

The trial took place at the Summer Assizes at Aylesbury, before Baron Channell, and the greatest eagerness was shown by an enormous crowd to secure a corner from which to watch the proceedings. Barriers were erected on the

staircase of the court-house, and they were jealously guarded by a body of policemen, who endeavoured to prevent the ingress of more persons than the hall would accommodate. As it was, every place was crammed with a dense mass of people, and the hall and street outside the court-house were thronged.

The prosecution was conducted by Mr. O'Malley, Q.C., and Mr. Metcalfe and Dr. Abdy defended the hardy and ferocious-looking prisoner, who pleaded "Not guilty" in harsh and sturdy tones. Jones was a short, rather spare man of about 38. The clothes stolen from poor Marshall had been taken away from him, and his own wretched garments restored, so that he cut a very wild and uncouth figure as he lurched into the dock, the cynosure of all eyes. His black beard had been allowed to grow and his hair was ragged and unkempt. He had very small, shifty eyes, high cheek bones, and a cruel mouth and thin lips. Altogether, he looked far from incapable of any atrocity, and his sullen manner and savage expression could not but impress one unfavourably.

The evidence against him, though purely circumstantial, was entirely convincing.

A Mrs. Spark—a sister to the late Mrs. Marshall—identified most of the clothing found on the prisoner or pawned by him at Reading as belonging to her dead brother, and she also recognised a watch-chain, which the prisoner had endeavoured to sell to a man named Smith, whom he had met on the road, as belonging to Miss Marshall.

A carman, named Harry Salter, gave evidence to the effect that he had fallen in with the prisoner near the Hanwell Asylum, on the Acton Road, at three o'clock in the afternoon of May 21. He asked Salter for a lift, and at ten minutes to six left the latter, at which time he was considerably nearer to Denham. Jones had told this witness that he had no money, but his brother near there had, and he should go to the house after dark and "have some of it." A woman who kept a public-house on the road from Denham to Uxbridge told the Court how the prisoner had come into her house at a quarter to eight on the morning of the Sunday, had called for some beer, and had taken out a purse, which was proved to have been the property of Marshall's wife.

Then there was Elizabeth Simpson's evidence relative to seeing the prisoner, or someone very like him, leaving the Marshalls' house at seven o'clock on the Sunday morning, but she did not appear to be absolutely certain that it was the prisoner, as she only saw his side face. Still, no doubt can be entertained but that it was Jones with whom she had spoken and that he was then fresh from the scene of massacre.

Medical evidence was called, and Dr. Ferris spoke as to the terrible nature of the wounds, and opined that the victims had been dead some 40 hours when the bodies were discovered. It was about eight o'clock when Alderman and Taverner had broken into the house, eight o'clock on the Monday evening, and the time of the attack may, therefore, have been about five o'clock on the Sunday morning—just after, indeed, the conversation between Taverner and the prisoner already alluded to.

Dr. Abdy, for the defence, raised every point that was possible and urged that the fact that the prisoner made no attempt to get far away from the neighbourhood was not compatible with his guilt. He also alluded to the unreliable nature of Mrs. Simpson's evidence, declaring that no one had positively seen the prisoner going to or from the Marshall's house, and that the latter was found dressed for the day, with clean things on for the Sunday, proving that he had not rushed down to the smithy in any fear or hurry. But his speech made no impression upon the jury, who only took two minutes to come to the conclusion that the prisoner was guilty and had committed the barbarous acts alone and unaided.

The judge assumed the black cap, and in his address to the prisoner remarked that the evidence had convinced him that Jones had been guilty of wholesale murder. He hoped the Lord would be more merciful to him than he had been to his victims. His lordship then passed sentence of death in the usual form, after which the prisoner, with a wave of the hand, said, "Thank you, my lord."

The prisoner suffered the last penalty of the law in the yard of Aylesbury Gaol, on August 8, 1870. Ever since his apprehension he had maintained the most callous indifference to his situation, and had refused all religious counsel. The Rev. Mr. Bumberry, the chaplain of the gaol, was unremitting in his solicitations to bring the prisoner to confession and penitence, but Jones only returned his kindness by curses and foul expressions. Having declared once that he was a Catholic, a Roman Catholic priest came from Wolverton to visit him, but the prisoner received him with insults, and at length he declared that he "did not believe there was either God or devil, heaven or hell."

At one time he virtually confessed to the murders by saying, "I am only sorry that I did not shoot Superintendent Dunham, and a —— Justice of the Peace that once sentenced me as well!" He was visited by his father and wife, neither of whom he had seen for years, but he received them coldly, and, when they gave way to their grief, said, "What have you to snivel for?"

At three minutes to eight the bell began to toll, and he was brought from his cell by two warders. Calcraft pinioned him in the corridor, and the procession to the scaffold then began. When the culprit came in sight of the gallows it seemed to absorb his whole curiosity, and, after surveying it for a moment, he attempted to go up the steps two at a time, but at the request of the warders he walked up in a more orderly fashion. The convict asked to be permitted to make a statement, and Calcraft agreed. Jones then turned round, facing the people, and the hangman lifted the cap above the murderer's mouth to enable him to speak. He said: "My friends, I am going to die for the murder of Charles—What's his name? I forget. Oh, yes!—Marshall, but I am innocent!" Calcraft then strapped his feet together, walked off and drew the bolt The body seemed to fall very heavily, and death was almost instantaneous, and only one momentary convulsion marked his end.

It may be here noted that there is every reason to believe that this fiend's real name was not Jones, but Owen. It is curious, too, that Owen should have been the real cognomen of another and more recent malefactor.

As Jones, or Owen, never made any actual confession, the manner of these atrocious crimes was never established, but the theory of the police was that Jones had marked the Marshall house as a likely one to rob some days before May 22. He went to the forge, possibly to steal tools, early on the Sunday morning, and was probably disturbed by Marshall, who went down early, as his wont was, to let his horse out. A struggle ensued, as we have said before, and, having slain Marshall, either from malice or from a desire to conceal what he had done, Jones killed the rest of the household, one by one, with the heavy hammer-headed axe, and had then washed and dressed and calmly taken his departure

A New Sort of Bailiff.

A BARRISTER who was in the habit of dropping his H's was once making a motion in the Court of Exchequer, and spoke of "the 'igh bailiff." Baron Alderson interposed with, "I have often heard of a bum-bailiff, but never heard of an eye-bailiff before."

He Dropped His H's.

A LEADING counsel who spoke with a strong Cockney accent, and, strange to say, also dropped his H's, had once been arguing for a long time, and when he finally concluded his junior arose and said: "My lords, considering the length of my learned leader's address, I will not weary the court with any remarks except only to add the H's."

Erskine and the Lamb.

COUNSELLOR LAMB was once engaged in a case, the opposing counsel being Mr. Erskine, who was at that time in the zenith of his fame. Mr. Lamb, who was timid and nervous, frequently commenced his argument with an apology, followed by an allusion to his humility, and once remarked that he felt himself growing more and more timid as he grew older, whereupon Erskine retorted: "Everyone knows the older a lamb grows the more sheepish he becomes."

Curran and the Land Agent.

CURRAN, the Irish lawyer, once followed the hounds at a meet about twenty miles from Dublin. His horse thoroughly enjoyed the sport, more so than his rider, who had never ridden to hounds before, and secretly hoped that the dogs would not find. In the midst of his gallop the hounds entered the field of a wealthy land agent, who had been severely cross-examined by Curran a few days before. This gentleman came up in a most patronising manner, and said: "Oh, sure, you are Counsellor Curran, the great lawyer. Now then, Mr. Lawyer, can you tell me by what law you are trespassing on my ground?"

"By what law, did you ask, Mr. Maloney?" answered Curran; "it must be the Lex Tally-ho-nis, to be sure."

The Story of a Crime born of a Crime.

NARENCE AMELOT.

"Hers was the fearful act, and yet I say
When hell's custodian extracts a toll
For sins, he only for that act shall pay
With his thrice damned soul."

—Translated from an anonymous poem which appeared in a French print at the time of the crime.

THIS is the story of a mad woman's crime. The woman did not suffer from hereditary insanity; no strain of the terrible malady ran in the veins of her parents or grand-parents, but she was so physically and mentally constituted that a signal outrage committed upon her person at an early age deranged her thinking faculties to such an extent that she became permanently possessed by one all-mastering, all-menacing delusion.

Narence Amelot was a Breton by birth, and the greater part of her youth and childhood were spent in that province of faith and lost causes.

As a child she was disposed to be very imaginative, given to day-dreaming, went to church regularly, confessed her sins, said her prayers, and altogether lived a tranquil and simple existence.

She had no cares and few sorrows, these latter being of the infantine and easily assuaged order.

She lived with her mother and an elder sister, who all believed in fairies, ghostly apparitions, and the holiness of "mother church."

We shall be reminded that we stated that there was in the family Amelot no strain of madness.

Certainly we made such a statement, and we meant it, and would in turn remind our readers that fairies and ghostly apparitions are as actual to the Breton peasant as the omnibus and the steam locomotive is to the English citizen.

The faith and the beliefs of the Amelots were regarded by their neighbours as nothing extraordinary. These people would rather have regarded it as extraordinary if the Amelots had expressed any doubts as to actuality of wood nymphs and the elves of the forest.

Such, then, were the surroundings of the child Narence; such, then, was her upbringing; a simple, joyful life, amidst kindred simple natures, with the angels of heaven always in attendant guardianship, and God Himself a close, familiar divinity. But every earthly paradise, every elysium, whether corporeal or spiritual, is made for the despoiler; it will be remembered that even in the Garden of Eden a serpent was permitted to infect the air of primitive bliss with its poisonous breath, and as history spends most of its time in repetitions, a serpent—this time in manly form—found its way into Narence's Breton paradise.

A young man named Paul Fouquet appeared one day as a visitor at the principal inn of D——.

He was handsome, tall and gainly, but withal his features possessed a singular charm that defies description; a certain hauteur of demeanour, together with his grace of person and charm of manner, rendered the stranger a person of marked yet affable individuality. In appearance he was undeniably noble, his high brow, dark, lustrous eyes, and sensitive mouth denoting a thoughtful and reserved temperament, and a scholarly mind.

To such a character, the sanguine dream-nurtured heart of Narence Amelot fell an easy prey. In all her life (her seventeen summers) she had never beheld the like of Paul Fouquet, never had she beheld so graceful, so mild-mannered, and yet withal so innately strong a personality. Figuratively, she fell down upon her knees and worshipped the strange god who had strayed into her formerly undeified, pastoral elysium.

Paul, in his turn, was interested and amused, if not flattered, by the evident admiration his person inspired in the young girl's breast. She came to him like the breath of spring, blowing on the age-cold cheek of winter—for a moment an echoing glow of past youth is brought to the dying season's face, for a moment the long-dead fires flicker into flame, and then all is as before—cold, cold, and dead.

So it was with Paul, a scoundrel so steeped in vice and sin that he felt his soul had become rotten, and was wasting away; for a moment the spring-spirited Narence, with her pure thoughts and innocent mind, with her face that was made from a rose, caused his long-numbed soul to vibrate for a while with a forgotten tremor.

But Paul Fouquet had lent his soul too long to the causes of iniquity for it ever to achieve a great and lasting revulsion of sympathies.

An epicure in emotions, he played negligently with the newly-awakened tremors of a long-silent instrument—his conscience; he touched the strings with dilettante fingers, listened to the strange, mournful chords of quavering desire for goodness, inwardly laughed at their thin, unresonant sound, and then—and then the cords snapped.

He became himself again, a brutish, callous soul, capable of any villainy to tease his vitiated desires into a minute's pleasure, yet hidden behind a mask of striking nobility. The innocence of Narence, her childish heart and child-like spirit, he no longer viewed with amused toleration, but with contempt.

Nevertheless, she was undeniably beautiful, and Paul desired to possess her bodily perfection, and he laboured to accomplish his wishes. He made love to her, flattered her, vowed to her eternal fidelity and affection, and still his experienced eye told him plainly that her innocence, her virginity, remained unshaken and unaffected by his onslaught. This annoyed him, wounded his vanity, and set a higher value on the object he was striving to attain.

He redoubled his efforts, carefully sounding the girl's inclinations, while giving her no possible hint of his own intentions, and he found her as before, smilingly innocent of any evil thought, safe behind her bulwark of unknowledge against the assaults and sallies of passion.

Paul was not to be denied, and, maddened by the defeat of his insidious art, the failure of the honeyed poison of his tongue to instil into the young girl's mind one drop of its leprous quilities, he turned, baffled, beaten, and derided by himself, to brute strength and inhuman savagery to accomplish the task in which artifice had failed.

Having propounded his scheme, he set to work to make all the necessary arrangements for its execution; and the first of these was to secure a speedy and effective retreat from the district's wrath, which, he argued, of necessity must attend the accomplishment of his crime.

He therefore paid his reckoning at the inn, packed his luggage, and consulted a railway time table as to the hours the different trains left the local station for Paris.

He fixed upon a likely one, went to the station, bought a ticket to the French capital, and despatched a letter to Narence asking her to meet him at an appointed time, at an appointed spot.

No word did he mention to her of his leave-taking, but simply mentioned that he wished to speak to her about a matter of urgent importance.

Sure enough, at the time stated Narence came flying down the lonely Breton pathway that led through the thickest and most secret portions of the wild, vast-stretching forests.

"What is it, Paul?" she cried, with evident excitement. "What is the business you wish to speak to me about?"

"Wait, my love. I will tell you in good time. Let us walk—it will take some time to tell."

He took her by the arm and led her through the mazy intricacies of shrub and undergrowth, talking incessantly, until Narence, suddenly looking up, found herself deeper in the heart of the forest and farther from all human communication than she had ever been before.

Accustomed as she was to the country and its serene quietude, the great silence of the mighty Breton forest awed her, nay, almost alarmed her, so overpowering was its intensity.

She looked at Paul to see if the silence had exercised a similar effect upon him; she found his face aglow with animation and his eyes blazing with a light that she had never seen in orbs generally tranquil and dreamy. He approached her, took her in his arms and kissed her.

Narence started from his grasp.

His lips had seemed a kindling burn that scorched her very soul. He seized her again, strained her to his heartless breast, and covered her face and neck with passion's flaming kisses.

A wild terror suddenly thrilled Narence Amelot's being, an awful terror, such as she had never previously experienced. Instinct took the place of knowledge, and told her that she was in danger, and that she must defend herself.

In a moment Narence became a woman, a woman defending her honour.

"Let me go, Paul! Oh! let me go!"

"I will never let you go!"

"I insist!"

"You are mine! I possess you!"

The forest re-echoed with the terrified girl's screams.

"Who will snatch you from me?"

Paul shook with uncontrollable, hysterical, mad laughter.

"Scream, scream, my pretty miss!" he cried. "Who can hear you? No one! Who will snatch you from me? No one! You are mine!"

Again the burning kisses, again the struggling embraces, again the cries of terror, again the mocking laugh!

* * * * * *

Twilight was entering the forest, the sun was but a faint, pale purple streak in the western sky. Narence, lying deep in the tall, waving grass, tried to clear her numbed, dazed senses, tried to think.

A bloody sweat was on her lips.

She wiped them carefully with a handkerchief.

Her bones ached, and there was a large, discoloured mark over her left breast.

A little to the left of her the undergrowth was tangled and downtrodden, which Paul had trampled on when fleeing from the scene of his awful crime.

Slowly, but surely, the past events were recalled to the injured girl's agonised mind. She remembered the meeting with Paul, the walk into the forest, the great silence, and then the terrible struggle.

Presently she tottered to her feet and wandered through the intricate wildernesses of the woodland, towards her home.

She lost her path and strayed throughout the ensuing night amidst the old, heavy-leaved trees, beneath the cold stars and the inscrutable heavens.

Never once did she weep or so much as shed a single tear.

In the morning a woodman found her, a wild, horror-stricken-figure, torn and dishevelled; stained with the juice of berries, and lacerated by prickly grass and brambles; her bodice loose, her hair streaming in disorder behind her in the wind. Her face was quite colourless, her eyes were swollen and bloodshot, and stared in a senseless fashion at the woodman.

She began to laugh, a dreadful, soul-harrowing laugh, such as may be imagined to echo in the halls of hell.

And this was the figure that was taken back to the tiny rustic cottage, and presented to the old Breton peasant-woman in the place of her lost child; this defiled, shame-haunted creature, for the joyous daughter, so innocent, so young, and so happy, who had left her home on the previous evening to meet her lover!

She told the story to her mother in broken snatches; the old woman was prostrated with grief at the fearful ignominy which had befallen her child, but the neighbours set to work at once searching for Paul.

He had vanished, had taken a ticket, had been seen to jump into the Paris train, and was now—heaven alone knew where!

For some time Narence's condition was one of torpor, interspersed with occasional intervals of hysteria. She was very silent, avoided the society of all her former companions, spent most of her time praying in church, and, to all outward appearances—except for the occasional outbreaks of hysterical delirium which we have mentioned—was as rational and tractable a creature as she had been prior to her terrible misfortune. At the expiration of eight months she gave birth to a still-born child. Soon after this melancholy event she left Brittany for Paris, being unable any longer to sustain the weight of her shame and sorrow under the gaze of those with whom she had been familiar from childhood.

So to Paris she went, and, once there, supported herself out of the slender wages of a seamstress.

Narence Amelot was mad!

She was gentle, silent, solitary in her habits, and devout in her sympathies, but for all that the bond-slave of a hideous delusion.

Her mania took a peculiar form. It has been said that Paul Fouquet was a remarkably handsome man, with striking features, and eyes that might almost be described as beautiful. These eyes had once been to Narence the sacred beacon lights of love. They were always in her sight, she could never forget them at night, she frequently dreamt they were staring at her, and would awake with an exclamation of fond affection for her beloved Paul.

Then came the outrage, with all its attendant horrors, and Narence's mind became unhinged.

The peculiar delusion from which she suffered, was to imagine that any individual possessed of eyes in any way similar to Paul Fouquet's, must likewise possess a similar nature, and be capable of similar acts of villainy.

So powerful was this extraordinary mania with Narence Amelot, that on several occasions when meeting persons in the streets of Paris, in whose eyes she fancied she detected a likeness to Paul's, she had taken to her heels and fled in an opposite direction, uttering the wildest screams.

When remonstrated with, she explained the cause of her discomfort.

"Are you then afraid of anyone who at all resembles your seducer?" once inquired an intimate interlocutor.

"Oh, no; it is not that!" answered Narence.

"Then why do you fly?"

"I am afraid of myself."

"Of yourself. Mademoiselle, you talk wildly."

"No. I am afraid that I shall kill them."

"Good God! what do you mean?"

"I mean this, that I always carry a weapon with me, so that if ever I should meet that devil again, I can kill him on the spot."

"That would be murder."

"It would be justice."

"Still, I do not understand now why you should fly from people who are not Paul Fouquet, who simply bear an imaginary resemblance to him."

"Because I know that all such people are as wicked as he is. They are all children of the same hell. When I see them, I can scarcely control myself. I feel that I must kill them."

"And yet you fly."

"If I killed them I should be guillotined."

"Ah, that is sensible! You are afraid of the guillotine?"

"No, but I do not wish to lose my life without first having taken that of Paul Fouquet."

Narence's friend said no more (it would have been better if she had done so), and the matter was accordingly allowed to drop.

Perhaps the friend thought that the unhappy girl was not serious, or had not sufficient courage ever to put her threats into execution; anyhow, she did not further interest herself in Narence's delusionary affliction, which is unfortunate, for had she made known to the proper authorities the unfortunate state of the unhappy girl's mind, it is possible, nay, even probable, that an awful tragedy might have been averted, a blameless and honourable life spared a horrible and wholly unmerited death, and the soul of Paul Fouquet—for to him we must persist in attributing the actual responsibility for the crime—have been saved from the weight of an additional sin.

HIS HANDS WILDLY GRASPING AT THE INCORPOREAL AIR.

After some time Narence fell out of employment, the season was winter, and the young woman had much difficulty in procuring the necessaries of existence

A life of immorality was abhorrent to her, for, as we have said, the girl's mind was still innately pure, and she would rather—as she thought—have sacrificed her soul by suicide.

She was a well-known attendant at several churches, and was also a familiar figure at a certain convent, where she was in the habit of doing some menial labour for the Sisters.

It was to these Sisters that she now turned, and the good nuns directed her to the Abbé De Broglie, a dignitary of noted piety and benevolence, who, like so many of his priestly brothers, combined with the importance of his sacred office the benevolence and good-fellowship of a philanthropist and the heart of a child.

The Abbé De Broglie was as easily approached by the poor seamstress as by the princess of a royal house, several of whom, it may be mentioned, he numbered amongst his penitents.

He supplied Narence with a considerable sum of money, and found her employment.

Narence was at first grateful to her benefactor, even to excess, and then once when he smiled at her, an awful suspicion crept into her mind, a suspicion that this saintly man in some way resembled the villainous Paul Fouquet.

A more remarkable delusion it is hardly possible to conceive.

The Abbé De Broglie was a tall gentleman of distinguished appearance; in his youth he had served in his country's navy so well that the much-coveted Legion of Honour had been awarded him, and the impression of his early vocation could still be seen in the straightness of his spare, tall form, and the buoyancy of his in no way enfeebled footstep.

His countenance was serene and tranquil; indeed, a perfect mirror of his soul, a reflection of a mind long since cleansed from impurity or wordliness of thought.

Yet this was the man whom Narence imagined to bear a resemblance to Paul Fouquet, liar, deceiver, outrager and general villain!

The impression gained upon the unhappy woman; she fancied that the Abbé De Broglie had a trick of glancing at her in a manner she remembered in Paul Fouquet. She became confident that the eyes of this man, who had in a double sense acted to her as a father, were lit by the same unholy light that had gleamed in the lust-illuminated optics of Paul.

The thought of this disturbed her greatly, and she spent hours in trying to persuade herself that it was all a delusion, and yet every time she beheld the Abbé De Broglie, the thought was driven back into her brain with additional force.

The abbé was her confessor, and on one occasion she fled from the confessional-box in a hurried and unseemly manner.

"I cannot bear it," she said to herself. "I see those eyes staring at me, those eyes that I know belong to none but the damned. I cannot sustain their gaze. I must do something or I shall go mad."

When questioned by the abbé as to the cause of her unceremonious exit from church, she said that she had been seized with a sudden fit of illness, and flown to the open air in the hope of it reviving her.

The abbé, smiling indulgently, commiserated with her, and told her to be careful of her health.

Narence shuddered; she felt that the ghost of Paul Fouquet was smiling upon her.

She sought the seclusion of her own room, tortured by a thousand doubts, suggestions, and tear-compelling thoughts. She felt as if a crowd of demons was thronging around her, gibing, laughing, and sneering at her misery.

Paul Fouquet had been a man of noble appearance; so was the Abbé De Broglie. Paul Fouquet was a most detestable scoundrel, a libertine, a liar, and a seducer of women; therefore, argued this mad girl, the Abbé De Broglie, who, to her mind, so strongly resembled him, must also be a libertine, a liar, and a seducer of women.

Like his brother in sin, he wore a mask of sanctity; like his brother in sin, he disguised the foulness of his heart in the disguise of nobility.

Then it seemed to Narence that a stern-faced angel appeared before her with a flaming sword, and cried, "Death! death! death! Exterminate the nefarious brotherhood! Let neither position nor prejudice warp your arms; slay all who come within your path!"

Through the long night Narence fought against the voices that impelled her to murder the Abbé de Broglie. In the morning, however, she rose from her bed resolute and determined, fully convinced that she had been commissioned by the heavenly powers to slay the priest.

She went to a cupboard and took out a six-chambered revolver, which she generally carried about with her, in the hope of meeting Paul Fouquet. She cleaned it and fully loaded it, and then she sat down and wrote the abbé a long letter.

She was too ill to come out, she said, but wished to see him at once on a most important matter. Would he come to her rooms? She implored him to come.

Having despatched this epistle, she waited in tranquillity for the coming of her victim.

She did not have to wait long, for the Abbé de Broglie, who received her letter just as he was setting out to visit an Austrian princess, who was at that time ill in Paris, postponed his visit to his royal patient, and hurried to the seamstress, whom he conceived to be labouring under some terrible distress.

To his surprise, he found her seemingly in health and good spirits, but still rather unusually serious in her demeanour.

"What is it, my child?" said he, on entering.

Narence provided him with a chair near the window, and then took one herself between him and the door.

"Father," said she, in low, earnest tones, "you have heard the story of my seduction."

"You have before told me the terrible story."

"Yes; my seducer's name was Paul Fouquet. He was a handsome man, with a noble face and the heart of a devil!"

The priest was silent; he could not quite see the drift of the woman's conversation.

"His soul shone through his eyes—the most horrible soul in the world——"

"My child——"

"Listen, father. I believe that that soul inhabits many bodies. I believe it inhabits your body. I can see it now staring at me through your eyes!"

The woman's face was flushed, and she hissed out her words through closed teeth.

She put her right hand into the bosom of her dress.

"You are mad, child, mad!" cried the priest.

"Mad! No; sane! saner than I have ever been!"

A suspicion of danger suddenly crossed the abbé's mind.

"What are you doing?" he cried, suddenly springing from his chair.

"Doing! Nothing; but I am going to kill you!"

She pulled the pistol from her bodice, and, pointing it straight at the abbé, fired.

He felt a slight tingling in the neck, and knew that he was hit.

He rushed upon his assailant to overpower her, and as he closed with her she fired again, and this time the shot entered his right breast. He flung the woman on one side and caught hold of the door handle. The door was locked.

Narence had reeled against the wall; she was now recovering herself. With wonderful agility, the abbé tore off his cassock and threw it over the woman.

He closed with her again.

She bit his hand with all the ferocity of a wild animal and kept possession of the revolver.

The abbé was growing faint from loss of blood.

As the two struggled and fought the pistol exploded again, and again the bullet entered the Abbé de Broglie's neck.

He reeled backwards, his hands wildly grasping at the incorporeal air.

Narence poured into his body the shots which were left in the revolver. The last one entered the abbé's mouth, and his brains were bespattered on the opposite wall.

He fell like a log and lay quite dead, blood trickling from all the six wounds. Narence stood still for some time, the smoking weapon in her hand, regarding her fearful handiwork with complacent eyes.

No one knocked at the door, no one attempted to enter.

Evidently, reflected the murderess, everyone is out, and no one has heard the shots.

She put down the pistol and washed her face and hands, donned her hat and jacket, and unlocked the door.

Crossing the room, she was careful not to tread in the already swelling pool of blood which flowed from her victim's body.

About an hour later the Abbé Buillot, a Carmelite, was told that a woman wished to speak to him at the door of the church.

He went down, and found Narence busy with her rosary.

"I have to tell you, father," she said calmly, "that I have murdered the Abbé de Broglie. His body is now at my rooms in the Rue Notre Dame des Champs."

"My child, you must be mad!"

"No; it is true, father. Go and see; I will wait here until you return."

The Abbé Buillot, horrified, and still half believing the truth of Narence's statement, hurried to the Comte d'Haussonville, a nephew of the Abbé de Broglie, and together they forthwith journeyed to Narence Amelot's apartments.

They found the body of the dead man as she left it, only the entire carpet of the room was now saturated with blood.

They returned to the Carmelite church, where they found Narence unconcernedly saying her prayers and waiting their return.

She was handed over to the Paris police, certificated to be insane, and was at once sent to a criminal asylum, where she lives at the present moment.

Out of crime cometh crime, out of sin cometh sin, and, to our thinking, the responsibility of the Abbé de Broglie's murder lies at the door of Paul Fouquet. Perhaps he read of it in the newspapers, laughed over the account with some boon companions; or perhaps his soul was already rotting in the cavernous depths of hell; perhaps he had repented—but this last supposition is unlikely.

He has never been heard of since the night of the Breton outrage.

He sowed the seed—surely he shall reap the harvest!

The Lawyer and the Tailor.

A LAWYER owed a somewhat large bill to his tailor, and the latter sent a messenger to demand payment. The lawyer said that he was exceedingly busy just then, and requested the messenger to inform his master that he (the lawyer) was not running away. Away went the lad with the message, but soon returned and told the man of law that he must have the cash. "Did you," said the lawyer, "tell your master that I was not running away?"

"Yes, I did, sir," was the reply; "but he told me to tell you that he was."

Very Unfortunate.

A YOUNG lawyer who was a very impudent fellow, but who, from nervousness, failed to remember a speech he had prepared in defence of a client, having commenced his oration, went on as follows:

"The unfortunate client who appears by me—the unfortunate client who—my lord, the unfortunate client——"

Lord Ellenborough interposed, and in a mild and encouraging voice said: "You may go on, sir; so far the court is quite with you."

Hooligans in 1838

HOW THE NEW POLICE HAD TO FIGHT TO ESTABLISH ORDER.

"Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war."
—MILTON, "To Cromwell."

THE new police in the early part of the late Queen's reign were as dear to the Hooligan brigade as they are to-day, and the annals of the Central Criminal Court contain many charges against ruffians who seemed to think the constables were fair game. Here is a little sample of last century Hooliganism.

The police had only been established in Uxbridge, then a country town, about four weeks, when Sergeant Cooper was going round his beat one evening and noticed a light in a stable. Entering, he found a man asleep there, by name Pearce, lying almost stark naked. The sergeant roused him and told him to cover himself up properly, which Pearce did, with many curses.

On the evening of the 9th of March, some three days later, Cooper again saw Pearce, who was standing with some friends at the door of the Bird-in-Hand public-house. One of the men, named Latham, was knocking at the door, and clamouring for admittance, for the house was closed. Cooper did not think it necessary to interfere with the men, who were not sober, but were not riotous or noisy, and was going on his way when Pearce came out from the little crowd and called out, "What the devil were you doing in my stable the other morning? You had no business there, you ——brute." "Don't make a noise, my good fellow," replied Cooper. "You know why I came into the stable." Pearce shook his fist at him, and Cooper passed on, hoping to avoid trouble, but Latham and Pearce followed him, the latter shouting out, "You —— police, we'll do for you. We'll drive you out of the town. We'll make this place too hot to hold you, you blackguards!"

The sergeant paid no attention to the men, for he was anxious to keep the peace in the place; but they followed, swearing at him and declaring that the scum of the earth was turned into "Bobbies." When Cooper reached the station-house door, he tried to open it, but Pearce pressed in front of him and struck a fighting attitude. Still desirous of preventing a fight, Cooper asked him to step aside, as he wished to go in. "I dare say you do, you cur! You're afraid of us," was Pearce's comment, as he struck the sergeant in the mouth.

Cooper then caught Pearce by the arm, and tried to force him into the station, but Latham threw himself round his chum and helped him to resist arrest. Hearing the noise, Fortnum, another constable, came out to assist, and both were attacked by the mob, who fought like fiends to rescue their comrades. By a stratagem, however, Fortnum and Cooper managed to get their two prisoners into the charge room, where the excitement had so stirred up the liquor they had drunk, that they both fell flat on the floor. Mrs. Cooper then joined in, and sat on the prisoners with her husband, while Fortnum opened the cells. Seeing that only one constable was there, Latham struggled up on to his knees, and drawing a knife, stabbed Cooper in the leg, on which the sergeant exclaimed, "My God! the villain has stabbed me."

"That's right; give it to the blackguard! Go it, Latham!" shouted Pearce.

By then Latham had managed to regain his feet, and kept making lunges at the sergeant with his knife, wounding him severely, so that in self-defence Cooper drew his truncheon and struck him on the side of the head with it. Pearce, who was being held down by Mrs. Cooper as well as by the sergeant, was then able to get up, and just at that moment the door of the station-house was burst open and the mob streamed in.

Fortnum returned, and a free fight commenced in the charge room, Mrs. Cooper bearing her share of the fray gallantly. Sticks and stones flew about freely, until Darvell, another constable, came in. Then the mob, fearing that further reinforcements might turn up, made a charge for the door, bearing Latham and Pearce with them, and shouting that no constables should ever arrest any of them.

Once the excitement of battle was over, Cooper fainted, and a surgeon had to be sent for to attend to him, for his wounds were serious and he was bleeding freely. Darvell then went out to see if he could get hold of either of the principals, but was unable to at that time.

On the following morning a knife was picked up outside the station, which was known to have belonged to Latham, and later in the day he was arrested in bed, by Darvell and another constable named Murray. Pearce could be found nowhere.

In due course, Latham was brought up at the Central Criminal Court and tried for the murderous assault. He pleaded "Not guilty," but the case was fully proved against him, and he was sent off to transportation for a term.

Nightly the behaviour of the roughs of Uxbridge grew worse, the police being hustled whenever a chance offered itself, and every ruffian taunting them with their inability to catch Pearce, and daily small charges of assault were brought before the magistrates. About the middle of June Constable Murray got wind that Pearce was in the neighbourhood again, coming to organise a gigantic attack on the police-station to avenge the punishment of Latham, and vowing that he would "do" for a constable himself this time. By watching where the other roughs went to at night, taking care not to be seen himself, Murray tracked Pearce down to Cullum Green, a village some two miles from Uxbridge, where he was hiding, and from whence he was directing his band of Hooligans, who were to drive the police out of Uxbridge for ever. Knowing the habits of the man, Murray waited till Sunday morning, and then, with the assistance of a couple of other constables pounced on him while he was having a lazy morning in bed.

Pearce was very indignant, and declared that he had not anything to do with the row on March 9, and had only come back from a trip in the North of England, adding that he was confined to his bed because some earth had fallen on him while he was working on the railway. Anxious not to cause his prisoner any unnecessary pain, Murray sent for a doctor, but while waiting for the medical man to arrive Pearce made a determined attempt to escape from custody, proving that he was perfectly able to be moved. He was then taken to the station-house, and later placed in the dock at the Old Bailey, where his exploits were rewarded with a year's imprisonment. Mrs. Cooper was commended for her pluck, and Cooper was eventually promoted.

With the disappearance of Pearce and Latham Uxbridge calmed down, and the reign of the new police was safely established.

He Objected to Suicide in Chambers.

MR. JUSTICE JOHN WILLIAMS went into his chambers late one night, and found that his clerk had committed suicide by hanging himself in the judge's room. On engaging another clerk Mr. Williams, with much gravity, thus addressed him: "I have one stipulation to make with you, and that is, should you hang yourself, which you can do or not as you think fit, pray do not hang yourself in my chambers."

A Diabolical Prosecution.

ADOLPHUS, the celebrated criminal lawyer, was prosecuting in an indictment for libel tried before Mr. Justice Maule, and the counsel for the defence concluded his speech to the jury thus: "This, gentlemen, is a shameful, an infamous, I may say a diabolical prosecution!"

"Gentlemen of the jury," said Justice Maule, when summing up, "you are told that this is a diabolical prosecution; but, gentlemen, you must give the devil his due, and find the defendant guilty."

It Sounded Well.

MR. EGAN, a well-known Irish barrister, was once addressing a jury, and having exhausted every abusive adjective and epithet of the English language, stopped for a word, and then added, "This—this—this naufrageous ruffian!" When he was asked afterwards what the meaning of the word was, he admitted that he did not know, but said he thought "it sounded well."

THE FALSE

Lord Willoughby.

An Extraordinary Case of Mistaken Identity which led to the Imprisonment of an Innocent Man.

"Poetic JUSTICE, with her lifted scale
Where, in nice balance, truth with GOLD she weighs."
—POPE, "Dunciad."

PART I.

MAY 10, 1877, was a gloomy day, a real English May day in direct opposition to the May days of which poets and others, with a strong disregard for the truth, sing. The City of London was murky, the streets dull, the sky overcast, great clouds, which from time to time broke and deluged the earth, scudded across the sky. Gloomy as it was outside, those who know the Central Criminal Court will not need to be told that within the classic precincts of the Old Bailey it was still more dismal. Through the dusty windows a few faint rays of light struggled; the lamps only served to accentuate the cheerlessness of the place and to make all present feel more miserable than their fellows who were compelled by business to walk the damp streets without. The fœtid atmosphere was already beginning to tell on judge, counsel, witnesses, and spectators; how much more must it have affected the tall, handsome young man who stood in the dock?

In the jury-box were twelve good men and true, summoned to make "true deliverance" between their sovereign lady the Queen and the prisoner at the bar, who stood charged with larceny, with obtaining valuable property from confiding women by means of a trick or by false representations. His name was Vilboir Weisenfells, alias John Smith, aged 27, a German Jew by birth and nationality.

To support the charges Mr. Fulton appeared, while the accused was defended by Mr. Montagu Williams. The latter gentleman died some years ago, deeply regretted by everybody, while the former became Common Serjeant, and later was raised to the dignity of Recorder of the City of London, which honourable position he now holds.

John Smith was tired of the ordinary methods of theft, and, improving on the "confidence trick," struck out a new line for himself. Here is what one of the witnesses against him swore to in the Old Bailey on that May morning:

My name is Louisa Leonard, and though I am married I do not live with my husband. On the 4th of April I was walking about near Charing Cross, when the prisoner came up to me and entered into conversation with me. He said that he would write me a letter. This he did, making an appointment to call at my house in Great College Street on the following Thursday. The day was rather inconvenient, as I was intending to move into fresh premises on that afternoon; but I agreed to see him. When he came, I had a friend, Miss Emily Ashton, chatting to me in the drawing-room. The accused was admitted, and we started talking. He said that he was Lord Willoughby, and that he had a serious proposition to make to me. I agreed to listen, and he then said that he had a nice little maisonette out at St. John's Wood, where he would like me to live. He suggested that he would like me to go there on the following Saturday in time for dinner. He would allow me plenty of money, a page, and a pony and trap. One thing struck me as strange; he was very anxious that I should not associate with the servants. I thought that it would be very nice to live with him, and said that I would come at the time named. Then he looked at my jewellery and said, "This is all rubbish, I suppose?" I said that unfortunately it was not very good, so he promised to give me some more, and borrowed one of my rings to make sure of the proper size. He also promised to send me some money from the Army and Navy Club, and told me to apply there whenever I was in need of cash. Then I showed him some filagree ear-rings, which he examined, and suggested that he should take them and have replicas made of them in pure gold. I allowed him to put them in his pocket.

The talk then turned on jewellery in general, and he showed me a ring which he said had been handed down from father to son by his ancestors since five hundred years before Christ. The ring looked old, but not quite as old as that. My wardrobe was then discussed, and Lord Willoughby asked for a pen and paper. He wrote a note to Messrs. Howell and James, of Regent Street, and gave it to me, saying, "If you take that there, you will be supplied with whatever dresses you like, for I should like my little wife to be well-gowned." I was delighted, but was even more pleased when he took a cheque from his pocket, filled it up, and placed it in a sealed envelope, which he handed to me, adding, "Don't unseal that, or they may think at the bank that it does not come from the lord." The bank I was to take the cheque to was the London Bank, No. 12, Lombard Street.

By this time it was getting on for three o'clock, and Lord Willoughby suggested that we had better be going as quickly as possible, because the banks all closed at four o'clock. So my friend and myself went downstairs, followed by the peer. When we reached the street, Lord Willoughby exclaimed, "Oh, what a nuisance! I have sent my brougham away. Have you any loose change in your pocket?" I said that I had fifteen shillings. "Give that to me," he rejoined, "you will have plenty when you get to the bank. Surely, thirteen pounds ten will be enough for you just at present." I objected to him taking the whole of my spare change, but he only laughed, took the money and threw the empty purse into the gutter. That done, he called a cab, put myself and Miss Ashton into it, and sent us off to Lombard Street.

When we reached the bank, the clerks took the sealed letter, consulted together for some time, and then came back to me and told me that the cheque was bad, and that the whole thing was a swindle. Of course, I got no money. Lord Willoughby never came back with my rings nor with my ear-rings. Messrs. Howell and James also said that they knew nothing about the Lord Willoughby who had written to them, and would not supply me with any dresses except for cash.

I was very much upset about the whole affair; however, I had to make the best of it.

On the 19th of April I was walking with Miss Ashton in Tottenham Court Road, when I saw the accused near the "Horse Shoe Tavern." "Look, Emily, is not that the captain?" I exclaimed. She said that it was, and I went up to the prisoner and said, "How are you? You never gave me what you promised."

Lord Willoughby looked surprised and cried out, "You be off. I do not know you. I will give you into custody. Who are you?"

I was annoyed, and answered that I thought it was my duty to give him in charge for taking my things. On hearing this, he walked off as quickly as he could, and then ran across the road. I followed him with my friend. Later he was taken into custody, and I charged him with theft. I believed everything he said, and hoped to get much better jewellery than I had.

Miss Emily Ashton corroborated every word of this remarkable story, adding that she also believed that the prisoner was actually Lord Willoughby.

A man named Cook then told the jury how he had been appealed to by the two women, and had run after the prisoner. Smith got into a cab, but the witness caught hold of the horse's head. The prisoner then called to the cabby to lash at witness with his whip, and the driver obeyed readily enough, but the witness still held on. Then John Smith got frightened, and jumped out of the opposite side of the vehicle and tried to run off, but was met by a constable and later arrested.

Next there stepped into the box a witness who has a good deal to do with this story. He was P.C. Eless Spurrell, E.R.25. He said that he was met by the prisoner, who had just got out of a cab. The accused was followed by a crowd of people, and spoke to the witness, saying, "Come round the corner of one of these houses. I am perfectly ashamed of this crowd of people running after me!" Cook came up at that moment and said that the prisoner had robbed two ladies, so the constable took the accused back to meet the women, and, later, took him to the police-station, where the charges were made. To these John Smith made no reply. On the prisoner when captured he found £4 in gold and five rings. The latter were put in in evidence, and one recognised as Mrs. Leonard's property.

Other witnesses proved that there was no such place as the Bank of London in Lombard Street, and also that Lord Willoughby was a fictitious title, not to be found in any record of the peerage.

For the defence, Mr. Williams, while not denying the evidence, contended that there was no larceny, the goods being simply borrowed, but the jury agreed that the prisoner was guilty of felony, and judgment was postponed temporarily while another charge was proceeded with.

This second charge was of precisely the same nature. Lord Winton de Willoughby, as the prisoner now called himself, had tried the same game on Miss Howard. The lady was to take the place of another woman with whom the noble lord had quarrelled. Her allowance was to be £10 a week for pin-money. She was to have a horse, trap, page, dresses, etc., exactly like Mrs. Leonard, but, in addition, her debts were to be paid, and she was to have £50 in cash immediately. The Bank of London was drawn on for £13 10s., and the cheque given to the lady, from whom the prisoner borrowed 11s. and a valuable ring as a pattern for some very superior jewellery which he was going to have made for her. The ring was one of the five found on him when he was searched at the police-station.

THE LADY ACCUSED HIM OF HAVING STOLEN HER WATCH.

When the accused was in custody Miss Howard identified him easily. The jury found John Smith guilty on this charge also. There were several other indictments against him, but the judge thought it unnecessary for them to be proceeded with, and at once sentenced the prisoner to five years' penal servitude, from which he was released in April, 1881, and was under the care of the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society till the following July, when he disappeared mysteriously.

We will here leave John Smith for a while and inquire into the life and doings of another individual. Some 61 years ago there was born in Christiansund, Norway, a little son to one Iver Olaus Beck, the captain and owner of trading vessels. The infant was christened in the parish church and given the name of Adolph. When he grew older he was sent to the State school in Christiansund, and acquired the rudiments of a sound education, suitable to the commercial life for which his father had destined him. Young Beck, however, seems to have been enamoured of the sea, and when but a stripling set forth in a sailing ship to seek his fortunes. He got as far as Valparaiso, and thence made a coasting trip up the Pacific coast, eventually returning to Europe in the same vessel. He then settled down in Bristol for a short while, learning some English and making himself generally useful in a merchant's office.

Later he returned to South America, and was mixed up in the revolutions which are continually occurring in the small States there, earning for himself golden opinions from those whom he served. Incidentally he was paving the way for a fortune at the same time. He acquired a concession of the Galapagos Islands, and started to exploit a company to develop their mineral wealth, and also managed to get concessions of copper-bearing lands.

It was while in South America that he made the acquaintance of the late Col. North, before that gentleman had become the Nitrate King, and in his company went to prospect for petroleum. Unfortunately neither he nor his companion "struck oil" on this expedition. In Ecuador and Peru, Adolph Beck did very well, and was highly respected by all who came in contact with him.

Though a commercial man, Mr. Beck was no carpet knight, and when there was a chance of fighting he was to be found in the fray, just as eager to bear his share of the brunt of the battle as if he had been a paid soldier, and it was in one of the skirmishes in Montevideo that he received a sabre slash across his right arm, which left a scar that afterwards caused the hardy Norwegian much trouble, and proved a powerful weapon in the hands of his enemies.

From 1868 till the end of 1884 Beck remained in South America, his trading operations taking him from Buenos Ayres to Quito, from Santiago to Colon. Then, having important concessions to dispose of, Adolph Beck returned to Europe, and in May, 1885, came to London for the first time in his life.

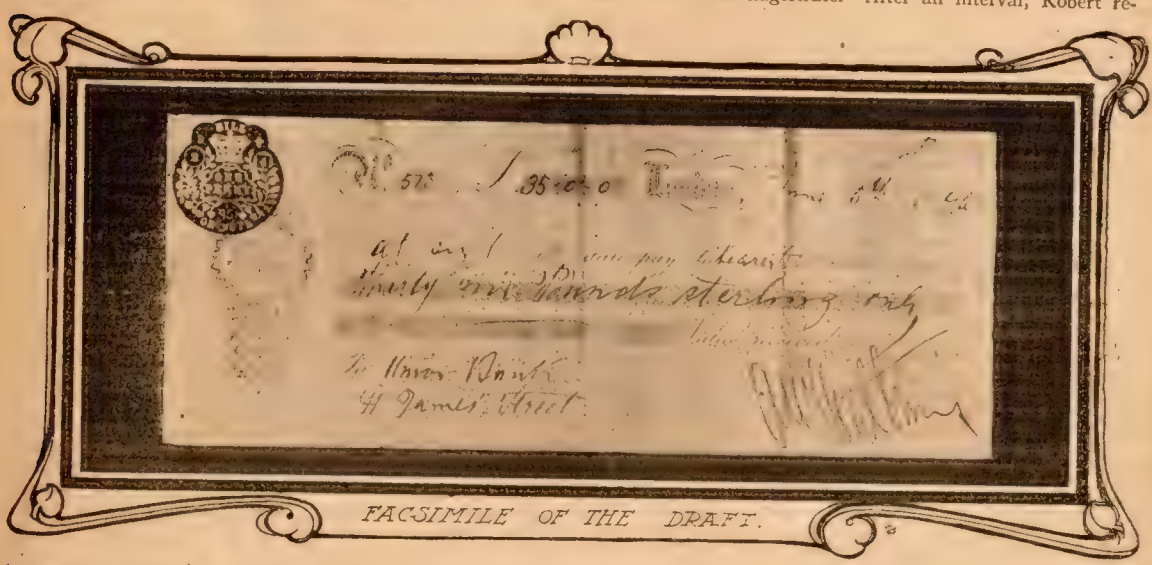
For the next ten years he conducted his business in an honourable manner with persons who trusted him implicitly, including both Scandinavia and Spain in his schemes. It must not be thought that he was a company promoter; he actually had excellent property to sell, and he naturally looked for the best market for his wares. Among other things he obtained, from a concessionaire of the Spanish

Government, the right to build an important railway, and he looked about for a financier to supply the capital.

Without much difficulty, a foreign bank, with a branch in London, took up the scheme, protesting that they had ample funds to carry the undertaking through in a satisfactory manner, and with them Beck did business. Later, he discovered that, far from the bankers having the money, they were in "Queer Street" themselves, and he made proposals to them to relinquish their claim, of course offering them a valuable consideration for so doing. The financiers refused, and the matter fell through, for the bank failed, and even threatened to sue Beck for the commission money and purchase money which they had paid to him.

After taking advice, he refused to pay money which he did not owe and which had been paid to him as a fractional portion of the sum due to him for disposing of the concession, the full amount offered being £15,000. Then he got a threatening letter from Paris to the effect that, if he did not return £5,000, everything was prepared for them to bring trouble upon him. Whether this letter has any bearing on the history which we are about to relate, we do not pretend to say, but it strikes one as singular that trouble should so soon follow on the receipt of the missive.

In December, 1895, Mr. Adolph Beck was living in a small flat in Victoria Street, Westminster, having moved there from the Buckingham Hotel so that he might have a proper place in which to receive those gentlemen with whom he was doing business. Prior to this year he had lived in hotels during the ten years he had been engaged in commercial transactions in England, because his frequent visits abroad made it well-nigh impossible for him to reside in chambers of his own, being an unmarried man and very uncertain in his movements. With the advent of the year 1895, however, Beck saw that he was likely to remain more constantly in England, and was able at last to settle down in a home of his own.



FACSIMILE OF THE DRAFT.

On the evening of December 16, 1895, at about six o'clock, Adolph Beck was standing at the entrance of the flats in which he lived—No. 139, Victoria Street—when he noticed a well-dressed woman approaching him. She looked at him for a moment, and then stepped up to him and said in an imperious manner:

"What have you done with my watch?"

Beck gazed at her in astonishment, fancying that she must have gone off her head; but she repeated the question, so he replied:

"I think you must be mistaken, madam. I have never seen you before in my life." On this the lady accused him plainly of having stolen her watch and several other articles, and mingled abuse with her assertions.

This annoyed Beck, and he told her that if she persisted he would have to give her in charge for abusing him and using threats. She still continued her declaration that he had robbed her, so Beck asked her to follow him, and he set off down Victoria Street in search of a constable. When he reached the end of Carlisle Place, he saw a policeman, and stepping up to him, complained that the lady who was following him had been abusing him, and declaring that she had been robbed of a watch. At that moment the woman came up and charged Beck with theft. All three then walked towards Rochester Row police station.

On the way there the woman again repeated her accusation, and Beck replied that he knew nothing whatsoever about the matter. Once in the station, the lady, who gave her name as Ottile Messonier, formally charged Mr. Beck with larceny, and his complaint was ignored. Of course, on such a serious charge there could be no question of letting him out on bail for the night, so the poor Norwegian was consigned to a cell to await his appearance before the magistrate in the morning. He had not been in the station for more than a minute or so, when two other women, who appear to have been directed by Providence to the spot, came into the office and also charged Beck with theft.

Then he was allowed to get what rest he could for the night.

Uncomfortable as the cell was, Beck felt certain that the whole matter would be explained in the morning, feeling conscious of his own innocence, and he did not trouble himself very much. He had been inured to hardship while in South America, and a night in a cell seemed but a trifling inconvenience.

Shortly after daybreak the prisoner asked one of the policemen to go round to a friend of his who lived close by, and ask him to send Mr. Baker, a solicitor, to him to defend him before the magistrate. After an interval, Robert returned and said that Mr. Baker was not available, and recommended Beck to employ another solicitor who practised a good deal at that court, and whom we will call Mr. X. This astonished Beck, but when, a little later, X's clerk came into his cell and described the doings of his master in such glowing terms, that Beck felt that even if he were guilty he would probably be instantly liberated if defended by the redoubtable X, he consented to employ him.

As soon as the night charges had been disposed of, Beck was placed in the dock of the Westminster Police Court, and charged with having stolen a gold bracelet, some diamond rings, and other articles from one Daisy Grant, and other articles of value from other women. Miss Grant's story was that she had met the accused in St. James's Street in the previous July, and that he had accompanied her to her chambers. He told her that he was the Earl of Wilton, and borrowed the rings and bracelet from her, the former to be patterns for some more jewellery, the latter to have some dents knocked out of it. She had never seen the prisoner since. The accused had also given her a cheque on the "Union Bank, St. James's Street," which he signed "Wilton." The bank did not exist. Mr. X refused to discuss this story, which he stigmatised as a "nice little fairy tale."

Ottile Messonier followed, and said that she met the prisoner on November 26 in Victoria Street. He stopped her and asked if she was not "Lady Eglinton, or Egerton." She said that she did not know the lady. Then he told her that he had large estates in Lincolnshire, and kept ten gardeners. Next day he called on her, and stayed for three-quarters of an hour. He took away a watch of hers to have it set with diamonds. After he had gone, she missed another

watch. The accused said that he was cousin to Lord Salisbury, and had a revenue of £180,000 a year. He gave her a cheque for £40 to buy dresses. The cheque was on the Union Bank, St. James's Street. There was no Union Bank there, but she went to the nearest branch, where she was told that the drawer of the cheque had no account. The watch which she missed was enamelled. The accused had been looking at it, and had told her that his collection of enamelled watches had been presented by him to South Kensington Museum. She recognised Beck on the previous day in Victoria Street by a scar on his face.

At this the magistrate asked the gaoler if Beck had such a scar, and the gaoler said that he had. A police sergeant then said that he had found £15 on the prisoner and some memoranda. Also in his rooms he had seen a lot of papers relating to mining property. There was nothing which threw any light on the present charges. Mr. Shiel then remanded the prisoner for six days, refusing bail.

At the subsequent hearings before the magistrate, other charges of precisely the same nature were brought against Adolph Beck—the same story of a title, a housekeeper wanted for his private villa, a ring for "measurement," a cheque on the Union Bank, and subsequent disappearance; till at last there were ten ladies seeking the punishment of the man who had defrauded them. We will not enter into these cases, for the essentials of each are the same; we will, however, mention that after the first sitting of the court Mr. X appeared to believe that his client was guilty, and thus greatly discouraged Beck, who was so dazed at the awful crimes with which he was charged, and of which he was innocent, that he could do virtually nothing. There was also another important development which must be recorded. Beck was shown a photograph and asked if he knew who it was. He said that he did not. "Why, it is you," replied the inspector. "No. It is not me," protested the Norwegian.. "Take off your coat," ordered the officer. Beck did so, and the policeman examined his right arm and found the scar of the sabre cut there. This the constable examined, made a few notes, and smiled to himself, for he thought that he had captured an old offender in the person of one John Smith, or Vilboir Weisenfells, of whom we have previously heard. Beck, who had never heard of the redoubtable "Lord Willoughby," could not understand why he was examined.

At the next hearing before the magistrate a constable, named Spurrell, was placed in the witness-box, and positively swore that Beck and John Smith were one and the same persons. He had arrested John Smith nineteen years previously, and he had not the slightest hesitation in identifying him again in the person of Adolph Beck.

This was startling news to the poor Norwegian, but as he knew that his solicitor had ample proof that he was in South America at the very time that Smith was in prison, he was not much alarmed, for he was confident that Mr. X would at once bring forward such evidence as would suffice to secure his release. His horror may well be imagined, then, when the lawyer said nothing, and the magistrate declared his intention of committing the prisoner for trial. Even then Mr. X kept silent, but when Mr. Shiel asked Beck if he had anything to say, and Adolph was about to make a statement which would put quite a different complexion on the case, the solicitor rose and, holding up a warning hand before the foreigner, ejaculated, "I forbid you to say anything; keep silent at once!" Beck, ignorant of legal procedure, thought that he was bound to obey, and said nothing, but it is possible that if he had been heard matters would have gone very differently for him. He was then formally committed to take his trial at the next sessions of the Central Criminal Court, and taken off to Holloway.

TO BE CONCLUDED.

The Long and Short of It.

WHEN Lord Redesdale was Lord Chancellor of Ireland, two barristers who pleaded in a case before him were distinguished for being the tallest and the shortest barristers on the circuit. Mr. Mahaffy was the very tall one, and Mr. Collis the exceedingly short one. The latter commenced his argument, when the judge interrupted him with, "Mr. Collis, it is usual for counsel to stand when addressing the court."

"I am standing, my lord, on the bench," was the reply.

"Oh, then, Mr. Mahaffy, I must ask you to sit down till your turn comes."

"I am sitting down, my lord," responded the lengthy one, and his lordship was much puzzled at the state of things.

In the Nick of Time

Being an account of a famous New Zealand crime and the attempted execution of "Jack Wells." How another man was discovered to be the real murderer, and how Wells was cut down and revived.

"Back from the jaws of death,
Back from the mouth of Hell!"
—TENNYSON, "The Charge of the Light Brigade."

THE town of Dunedin is the capital of the Otago provincial district of New Zealand, and is one of the most flourishing and prosperous cities of the Southern Cross. It is beautifully situated on a picturesque bay, its white houses and green verandahs glisten in the strong southern sun, and its smiling visage, enveloped in a wealth of verdure, reminds one of the hackneyed line, "where every prospect pleases and only man is vile." For Dunedin contained some very undesirable inhabitants until within the last few years; indeed, most of the larger Australian and New Zealand towns have or had their full quota of ne'er-do-wells, and worse.

At the time of which I am about to write, not a few desperadoes made Dunedin, or its environs, their headquarters, and crimes of a more or less serious nature were like anything but angels' visits, few and far between. In the present year of grace Dunedin is a peaceful and law-abiding city, singularly free from serious offences, but I dare swear that the notorious case of which I am about to write is not yet quite forgotten. It created a tremendous sensation throughout the colony at the time; but, though it happened a good many years ago, certain reasons exist why it would not be desirable to give the right names of the principal performers in the drama, which might fittingly be called "A Tragedy of Errors," or even to mention the exact date of these occurrences. Readers, however, may rest assured that this history of "Jack Wells" is not a mere effort of a lively imagination, but that it rests on the sure basis of historical fact and authentic circumstances. And so to our story.

In Dunedin, then, in the year 18——, there resided a man of some thirty-eight years of age, whom we will call, for the purposes of this story, John Wells. He was by trade a carpenter—an expert one at that—and in those comparatively early days in the colonies very good wages could be earned by a man who knew his trade. Wells owned a cosy wooden shanty some two miles from the town; had a decent bit of ground besides, which he cultivated in his spare time; had money in the Dunedin Bank, and was accounted a well-to-do man, and a staid and respectable member of the working classes. Jack Wells had a sweetheart, by name Mary Lewis. She was a plain, homely girl, of about twenty-five, and devotedly attached to our hero, whom she regarded as quite a shining light amongst men. The lovers did not meet as often as they—or, at least, one of them—could wish; for Miss Lewis was postmistress at a little up-country village, which shall be nameless, some thirty-eight or forty miles away from Dunedin. Occasionally, at rare intervals, Wells would saddle one of his two strong and staying little ponies, and ride over to visit his fiancée, for whom he felt a placid rather than a passionate regard. It was understood that they were to be married the next summer, when Jack's prospects would

be even better than they were now, and by which time his "holding" might be get ready to please the critical eye of a new-made bride. Wells himself was in no hurry. He was sure of his Mary, sure of her affection and constancy, and for himself, he was not yet quite tired of single-blessedness and its consequent freedom. Besides, there was Isabel Madden, a young person by no means ill-disposed towards the stalwart carpenter, and the latter did not feel as yet inclined to forfeit the little tête-à-tête conversations, the trifling pressures of the hand, the occasional kiss which that amenable young lady graciously granted him. Isabel Madden was pretty, and only nineteen—an attractive age to a man who is bordering on the "forty" period of life. She was amusing, bright and frivolous, fresh from the delights of Sydney, from which gay town she had come as a domestic servant with a wealthy family which had taken up its residence at Dunedin. Jack Wells did not allow that he was actually in

JOHN WELLS WAS CUT DOWN.

love with her, but he liked to stand chatting to the pretty servant as he passed her at the gate on his way to or from the town, and at these moments of stolen pleasure I am afraid that poor Mary Lewis, away at her lonely post office, was almost, if not quite, forgotten.

One day Isabel Madden was discovered to be missing. It was a Sunday afternoon, and Mrs. St. Aubyn, her employer, had rung for her attendance. Another female servant answered the summons, and on being told to send Isabel upstairs to her mistress, replied that she had gone out before the mid-day meal—at eleven o'clock, as a matter of fact—and had not returned. Mrs. St. Aubyn was a little alarmed at this, slight as the circumstances seemed. But she had herself requested Isabel to come to her at four o'clock to read to her—the lady was an invalid, and Isabel read well—and it was unusual for the girl to deliberately forget or neglect the orders of her kind mistress, of whom she was known to be very fond.

Mrs. St. Aubyn did not make immediate inquiries, but when evening came, and brought no sign of Isabel, she became seriously alarmed, and something like an organised search was instituted. Some explanation of, or at least a clue to the cause of her absence was almost at once obtained, for a note, a pencilled scribble on a half sheet of letter-paper, was found crumpled up on the floor of the girl's bedroom, just, apparently, where she had dropped it. The note was dated Saturday night, and read as follows:

"Be at the Gap to-morrow morning at half-past ten.—
Yours, "J. W."

A fellow-servant of the missing girl at once came forward and stated that she had been standing at the gate overnight for a breath of air, and that Wells, the carpenter of Hollow Bush, whom she knew by sight, had accosted her and asked her to deliver a note to Isabel. It was then in an envelope, sealed, but not directed, and she had given it to the girl at bedtime the same night.

Pending these inquiries at the house of Isabel's employers, an appalling discovery had been made by two men who had been out shooting, and who were returning to Dunedin in the fading light of a fine spring evening. Passing a lonely place in Hawthorn Lane, their dog had started a hare, and in pursuit had sprung over a thorn fence, and followed the game into the wood. They waited for him to come back, and whistled and called the dog by name, but he did not return, and, fearful that their favourite pointer was caught in one or other of the traps that were placed there, they got over the hedge and entered the wood. They had not proceeded far when their whistling and calling was answered by the dog with loud barks, and, being guided to the spot by the sounds, they discovered in a hollow the dead body of a woman lying on her back. Her throat had been cut in the most brutal manner, and the hands had been slashed with some sharp instrument, suggesting that the poor girl had used them in a vain attempt to protect herself from the murderous knife. The victim was soon proved to be Isabel Madden. A medical examination revealed the fact that she was some four months advanced in pregnancy, and this seemed to suggest a possible motive for the hideous crime. The police at once came to the conclusion that the

writer of the note of assignation was the betrayer of and slayer of the girl, and inquiries were made as to the movements of John Wells on the day of the tragedy.

Asked to give an account of his movements and whereabouts, Wells admitted being the writer of the letter found in the girl's bedroom, and stated that he had gone to the Gap that morning and had waited for Isabel to keep the appointment, but she had not turned up at half-past eleven, and he had then walked towards the house of Mrs. St. Aubyn, which was three-quarters of a mile from where he had expected to meet the girl. Seeing nothing of her, however, he returned to his home, and spent the whole day there, until, in fact, the news came of the girl's murder and of the suspicions directed against himself. He was detained in custody on suspicion, and other circumstances were soon discovered which seemed to point to him and him only as the murderer of the girl. It was established that he was often seen talking to and flirting with the deceased, that he was engaged to marry another girl who would probably have thrown him over if the nature of his relations with Isabel was made known to her, and he admitted the incriminating note. Recent bloodstains were found on some of his clothing for which he could only account in a very lame and improbable fashion, and one witness came forward who swore that he had seen the deceased girl with a man greatly resembling the prisoner in dress, height, and build, close to the spot where the body was found, at eleven o'clock that morning.

On this and other evidence less to the point Jack Wells was tried and condemned. He strongly protested his absolute innocence, either of the betrayal or the murder of poor Isabel, and the counsel for the defence made an eloquent plea on his behalf, but the jury could not be convinced, and the prisoner was sentenced to be hanged in a week following the trial. Most people believed him to be guilty; Isabel's employer was strongly incensed against him, and no effort was made to stay the hand of justice, but poor Mary Lewis never wavered in her belief in her lover's innocence, and the agony of mind she endured as the day drew nearer when he must suffer a shameful death cannot be described.

Into some emotions of the human heart it is not well to pry too closely. But Providence was on the side of Mary and her innocent lover, and the girl was destined to be the means of saving him from the scaffold, or, at least, from a shameful death thereon. Two days before the date of execution Mary Lewis was sorting some letters which had just arrived by mail, and for which the inhabitants of the small village would call that afternoon, there being no postman to deliver letters in that remote spot. One of these attracted her attention. The postmark indicated that it was from Dunedin, where all her fears and hopes were centred She turned the letter round, and noticed that the sealing-wax which kept the flap of the envelope down had broken, and that the letter was practically open. A monstrous curiosity seemed to consume her, an all-impelling desire—mysterious and obscure—to learn what the letter contained seemed to master her every faculty. She sat for some moments slowly turning the letter this way and that, and then, flinging the scruples of conscience to the winds, she drew out the contents, and as she read the first few words her heart leapt in her bosom, her eyes sparkled, her breath came in quick gasps, and the hot blood mounted in one great flood to her burning cheeks. He was innocent! Innocent! That was what the letter said and meant. She could save him—she alone! The letter was from a man at Dunedin to his brother at this village. It spoke of the murder. It told how the writer had followed the girl from Sydney with the fixed determination to rid himself of her by any means, fair or foul. It told how discovery of their relations would mean ruin; how he had met the girl in a quiet spot on her way to keep the appointment with Wells; how he had killed her, and intended to fly the country but for the fact that the latter had been arrested, tried and condemned.

Her mind was made up in an instant. There was no means of reaching Dunedin except by walking, and she would start at once. She left the letters with a neighbour, retaining the precious one which would save her lover's life, and, without a word to a soul, proceeded on her errand of mercy and of justice with a heartfelt prayer to God that she might be in time.

John Wells's time had come, and he was led forth to die. The scaffold had been erected in the market-place of Dunedin, and all the city had turned out to witness the death of a detested murderer. He had never ceased to protest his innocence of the deed, but the time for that had gone now. He had sins, less heinous, but still great, to repent him of, and he joined with fervour in the prayers of the surpliced chaplain, who never left his side in this his hour of need. He gazed down at the upturned faces of the crowd beneath him, and then up at the blue and smiling skies. What lay beyond? Well, he was soon to know. There was the hangman, grim and inscrutable, there the myrmidons of the law he had outraged, and there the kindly governor of the gaol where he had been confined. He is pinioned, placed over the fatal drop, the signal is given, the lever is drawn, the bolt falls, and he is launched into eternity.

But stay! Someone on horseback dashes wildly through the multitude. It is a Government official, and he waves a blue paper in his hand. "A respite!" yell the crowd, and so it is. John Wells is hanging, but he is hurriedly cut down, his unconscious form is removed from the gallows, and tremendous efforts are made to resuscitate the vital spark. The drop had been a short one, too short to effect an instantaneous death, and there is a chance that John Wells, so nearly murdered by the law, will live. He does live, and Mary Lewis's prayers are answered. He lives to clasp the faithful one in his arms, to thank God for His infinite mercy, and to relate his experiences of hanging.

He felt, he afterwards explained, no pain as he fell beneath the drop; he felt a great noise, like rushing waters, in his ears, and then he seemed to be in an impenetrable darkness, in an illimitable blackness of empty space. That phase of his emotions was only momentary, for the next instant various and well-defined colours seemed to pass before his eyes, he saw a blue canopy of variegated stars, of green and blue and crimson, changing instantaneously and kaleidoscopic in their varied hues. Then the rushing of heavy waters came again, the brilliant colours faded, and—he knew no more. The explanation of this extraordinary rescue from death lies in the shortness of the drop. John Wells was half-strangled, but his neck had not been dislocated, as is usual with persons who are hanged, but he was not the same man after his terrible experience, and he died two years after this event in Melbourne, to which city he and his faithful wife had removed after this marvellous dispensation of Providence. The real murderer of Isabel Madden committed suicide before he could be tried, and so our story ends.

His Two Opinions.

MR. FAZAKERLY, an eminent counsel on the Northern Circuit, was once stopped by a neighbour of his, a country squire, who asked him about some point of law which was at the time very important to him, and he received the opinion, verbally, from the learned counsel.

A short time afterwards the squire called at the barrister's chambers, and informed Mr. Fazakerly that by following his opinion given a few days before, and which was incorrect, he had lost £5,000. The lawyer denied ever having given an opinion on the matter, and, referring to his books, said he was quite sure he had not done so.

"Oh, yes," said the squire, "you gave it me, if you remember, during a ride we had, near Preston."

"Yes, yes," said Mr. Fazakerly, "I do remember now, but that was only my travelling opinion; and, to tell the truth, neighbour, my opinion is never to be relied upon unless the case appears in my fee book."

The Yankee Lawyer's Advice.

A GENTLEMAN once consulted Rufus Choate, the eminent American lawyer, as to the steps he should take for obtaining redress for a great insult and wrong he had just suffered. It appears that having been engaged in a dispute with one of the waiters at a hotel where he had been stopping he had been told by this minion to "go to h——."

"Now," said the gentleman, "I ask you, Mr. Choate, as one learned in the law, and as my legal adviser, what course under these circumstances I ought to take to punish this outrageous insult?" The lawyer looked serious, and told his client to again tell him all the incidents leading up to the outburst on the waiter's part, about which he complained, and, having done this at some length, the gentleman said, "And now, Mr. Choate, what can I do?"

The lawyer stood silent for some time, as if in deep thought, scratched his head, adjusted his eye-glass, and then solemnly delivered himself as follows: "I have been running over in my head all the statutes of the United States, and all the statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and all the decisions of all the judges in our courts therein, and I may say that I am thoroughly satisfied that there is nothing in any of them that will require you to go to the place you have mentioned. And if you will take my advice, then I say decidedly—don't go."

Criminal Problems

THE LYNCHING QUESTION.

S lynching ever justifiable? That is a question which many of our readers must have asked themselves time after time when they have encountered in the columns of their daily papers a description of some terrible act of summary justice which has taken place in the Southern or Western States of America. Has a mob of people any right to arrogate to itself the power to inflict punishment for any offence, and if so, under what circumstances?

In the first place, then, what is lynching? It is the infliction of punishment on an individual by his fellows without recourse being had to the ordinary processes of law. It partakes, therefore, of the nature of a breach of the law. But it must be remembered that the people themselves are the real source of law, the actual fountain of authority, whether they have vested their powers in a monarch or in a council or senate. In the earliest ages, men banded themselves together for mutual protection and support, and, that order might be preserved amongst them, they voluntarily surrendered a portion of their liberty, agreeing to vest the right to make ordinances, which were to be binding on all, either in the hands of a monarch or in a commission, such as the senate of Rome or the parliament of a republic. Long years of subjection to rulers have led the people to forget that whether the supreme power in the State be a king or a council, the authority wielded is the gift of the nation, the laws imposed are the outcome of the popular will.

Can the law-givers, therefore, commit an offence against themselves? May not those who have made the law also break it? No, save by constitutional methods, determined on by the majority of the community, or, under very special circumstances, involving no actual breach of the principles of the national law, but merely an alteration of procedure. As a whole the people can act; individually they are powerless, for they have long ago surrendered their right to direct their own actions in matters affecting others.

In the case of lynching, then. The summary execution of the offender may, or may not, be preceded by trial. If no trial, even the irregular one which generally obtains, be held, then there is no definite certainty of the culprit's guilt. The people have committed murder; the lynching is a crime, and a heinous one at that. If there be a trial, and it be clearly proved that the accused has been guilty of the offence with which he is charged, the case is not so bad; but regard must be had to the point whether the crime of which he is convicted is legally punishable with death. If it is not, if the lynchers have added one iota to the penalty decreed by the mass of the community, then they are guilty of murder and liable to punishment. Their act is unjustifiable, and is an insult to the State. If, however, the legal punishment be all that is inflicted, then the lynchers have but altered the ordinary course of procedure; a serious matter, but at times justifiable.

The only circumstances which render it in any way right for the whole community, or, rather, for the inhabitants of a particular district, to sit, as a whole, in judgment on an individual and to carry out the ordinances of the law themselves, are these: If the judges of that district are so hopelessly corrupt that there is no hope of justice being done, and repeated attempts to have upright judges appointed have failed, then it is conceivable that the people have the right to take the administration—not the alteration—of the law into their own hands temporarily, constituting the whole population a commission for the administration of justice. It has been said, and rightly, that a lynching is the greatest slur that can be cast on the magistracy of a district, for it is an outward expression of distrust in the integrity of those who have been appointed to enforce the law.

If the procedure in Judge Lynch's court is not strictly impartial, if every effort is not made to ensure true justice being done, if the penalty is one whit more severe than that laid down in the statute books, then a grievous crime has been committed, for which the people must be held responsible.

But there are apologists for the lynching which takes place to-day in America. It is said that unless certain crimes are put down with a strong hand, the white women in certain regions will not be safe. That is absurd. The laws of the United States are sufficiently severe to suppress any crime, and are impartially administered. The very lynchers make no charge of corruption against their judges, but they think that if they burn or hang a few negroes they will improve their States. They are guilty of a dastardly crime, and their apologists are equally cowardly in pretending that the white population of America is incapable of protecting itself by its own laws. Others say that lynchings are means of enforcing a change in the penal code of the States. This, again, is false; the constitutional means for the improving of legislation is quite strong enough to bring about any change should the majority of the people desire it. Apologists for modern lynching have no solid argument in favour of the brutal custom.

Moreover, lynching in the present day does active harm to a country, for it cannot be justified in any civilised State, if the grounds given above are the only ones which make the infliction of summary punishment permissible. It disturbs the population, causing what virtually is a riot, fermenting the worst passions of the populace, and giving vent to the most brutal instincts in man. It weakens the respect for the law, renders legitimate punishment less effective, and lessens the sense of security in all peaceable persons, for the lynchers are frequently of the lowest class, backed up by a few men who ought to know better. It is a form of punishment which should be put down with a strong hand, for it is a positive disgrace to any country in which it occurs. In civilised lands it is a crime, in uncivilised States it is a confession of judicial corruption, or of unbridled brutality.

LEAVES FROM . . OUR NOTEBOOK

Sheriffs as Judges.

THE heritable sheriffs of Scotland, prior to the passing of the Act taking away their powers in 1746, had the right to judge and condemn criminals within their jurisdiction. After 1700 they did not often use their privilege, and possibly the trial of William Valentine, who was condemned to death for burglary, by the Earl of Haddington, Principal Sheriff, on 10th July, 1733, is the last occasion on which a man was sent to the gallows by a sheriff.

Use for the Hangman's Rope.

WE all know how relic-hunters and curio-collectors used to bid for portions of the ropes with which criminals had been hanged, but there were others who were desirous of obtaining pieces of the fatal hemp. These were the gamblers and card-sharpers, for amongst them the gaming fraternity to carry a fragment of the hangman's rope in the pocket was long regarded as a certain means of obtaining luck at cards.

Debtors as Sailors.

IN the reign of Queen Anne an Act was passed for the liberation of such insolvent debtors as promised to serve at sea, or to procure some other person to become a sailor. A similar enlargement was granted to those who served her Majesty in the army. At the commencement of the last century it was the custom to grant a pardon to those convicted of poaching on the condition that they joined the Navy.

Answers to Correspondents

The Editor will be pleased to answer any suitable questions.

GRANVILL.—This will appear shortly.

HIRSUTE.—Bearded murderers are rare in England.

WANTAGE.—The mutiny on the "Caswell" will shortly be described.

F. M. R. (Chester).—The first execution by electricity was that of William Kemmler in 1889.

ARCHIE (Bolton).—The present form of gallows was designed by the Surveyor to the Home Office in 1885.

L. L. J.—"The Man of Blood" was a nickname given to Thomas Simmons, who was hanged at Hertford in March, 1808, for murder.

F. HORWOOD (Luton).—We have repeatedly stated that Michael Barrett, a Fenian, who was hanged on May 26, 1868, was the last man publicly executed.

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